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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you support the idea of hosting some of the Japan tsunami and earthquake victims here in the CNMI?

Let your voice be heard!
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to cast your vote.

INSIDE

Four Gold
Do Re Mi brings home four gold medals from the Tumon Bay Music Festival.

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Japan Crisis
Asia's richest nation faces a mounting humanitarian, nuclear and economic crisis.

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Luxury Car
The 2011 Hyundai Equus has all the luxury features you'd expect in its class.

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Regents adopt show-cause report; no NMC president yet. PAGE 3
State Department offers assistance to US citizens in Japan. PAGE 6

CNMI VS GUAM VS PALAU

A meager slice of the market

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Despite having more natural attractions and historic war sites, the CNMI remains far behind Guam in Japanese arrivals.

SPECIAL REPORT

From January to December 2009 alone, the Guam Visitors Authority tallied a total of 825,129 tourist arrivals from Japan. That number dramatically increased in 2010 when GVA posted 893,667 arrivals from this key market. These arrivals were from 12 different cities in Japan.

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JAPAN ARRIVALS

Guam and Palau are calendar years (Jan. to Dec); the CNMI is fiscal year (Oct. to Sept. next year)

	2009	2010
Guam	825,129	893,667
NMI	191,111	185,032
Palau	26,688	29,318

Inos urges NMI residents to open homes to quake, tsunami victims

» Registration for participating families, plan yet to be finalized

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Acting governor Eloy S. Inos called on CNMI residents yesterday to host or welcome into their homes Japanese nationals who are affected or displaced by the 8.9-magnitude earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan on Friday.

He said this is to show the CNMI's solidarity with the Japanese people,

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GREEN ENERGY

Acting governor Eloy S. Inos, fourth from left, and Education Commissioner Dr. Rita Sablan, third from left, along with other government officials and private sector partners, lead the groundbreaking for six wind turbines and 95 solar panels at the Saipan Southern High School yesterday morning, as part of a federally funded green energy project that will also cover 10 other schools on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Once the SSHS project is completed, the energy produced by these new wind turbines and solar panels, in addition to the existing ones, will be enough to run the entire campus. HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

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Japan's nuclear woes no immediate threat to NMI

» Inos forms team to work on emergency plan

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The nuclear crisis in Japan does not pose any immediate threat to the CNMI, and people need not panic, acting governor Eloy S. Inos said in an interview yesterday morning.

Inos reiterated this when the administration issued a statement hours later, saying that the CNMI government is closely monitoring the nuclear situation in Japan.

To be on the safe side, though, Inos said he assembled a team on Sunday to work on an emergency plan and to continue monitoring the nuclear crisis in Japan.

The acting governor named key officials from emergency response agencies to continuously monitor all communications and developments regarding the

See THREAT on Page 4

Local

MMA fighter gets 15 days for kicking man, damaging car

Mixed martial arts fighter Maitai K. Charley was sentenced to 15 days in prison for kicking a man in front of his child and damaging the door of a couple's car in Susupe.

In an order issued last week, Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja sentenced Charley to two years in prison, all suspended except for 15 days, with credit for the nine days he had already served in jail.

After serving his sentence, the 26-year-old Charley will be placed on supervised probation for three years.

The judge ordered him to pay $240 in restitution to the couple for the damage to their car and write them a letter of apology. He was also directed to perform 300 hours of community service and complete a substance abuse counseling program.

The Office of the Attorney General had charged Charley with two counts of assault and battery, four counts of disturbing the peace, one count of criminal mischief, and one count of assault.

Charley pleaded guilty to two counts—assault and battery and criminal mischief—as part of a plea deal.

The case arose from an incident on Feb. 6, 2010, on Saipan, when Charley kicked Chito Soler Cristobal in the head. Charley also damaged the passenger door of a Nissan Sentra owned by Feminencio Fernando and his wife, Maria Fernando.

Police said that Cristobal's 10-year-old son, who witnessed Charley push and kick his father, was traumatized by the incident. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

'Protect the integrity, independence of judiciary'

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

Visiting federal judge John Allen Houston urged the community to keep in mind the integrity of the judicial process and the independence of the judiciary.

"You may not always agree with [judicial officers], and sometimes they enforce laws that they did not make, they enforce laws made by the governing body. It is not their problem if they're following those laws and it's against the public whim or the public pulse," said Houston during the Rotary Club of Saipan meeting on Tuesday.

Houston, who is from the southern district of California, said their district—composed of 13 active district court judges and 11 active magistrate court judges—is the third busiest criminal docket in the U.S as they deal with about 5,500 felony cases annually.

According to Houston, all judges have the responsibility to ensure equal access to courts.

"It impacts the very integrity of our judicial process to make sure all citizens, all persons living within our communities, feel that they have equal access to the courts and that they will be heard when they come to court," he said.

Houston noted that the integrity of the judicial process in the U.S. differentiates it from those of other countries. "A lot of countries have or have had independent judiciaries but that doesn't mean there's integrity in the process as viewed by the citizens of those countries," he said.

He said it is important to maintain the integrity of the courts and the independence of the judiciary since doing otherwise can take away certain rights and privileges of people, removing the balance of power among the three branches of the government.

Houston also highlighted the nomination to the federal court of Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona Manglona.

"We, as district judges, will welcome the new member to our bench and I'm sure I'll get to know her over time in our various conferences here in the 9th Circuit," added Houston.

Faisao: NMI, Guam should have separate programmatic agreements

Community and Cultural Affairs Secretary Melvin Faisao opposes the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's recommendation to integrate the CNMI and Guam in a programmatic agreement relating to the relocation of U.S. troops from Okinawa to Guam.

"The ACHP erred in its interpretation for merging Guam and CNMI into one programmatic agreement," Faisao said in a letter dated March 4 to Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy/Environment Donald Schregardus.

Faisao disclosed that the U.S. Department of Defense drafted the programmatic agreement for the CNMI and Guam at the recommendation of ACHP.

According to Faisao, the CNMI has been in consultation with the Department of Defense on the relocation of some 8,000 Marines from Futenma, Japan, to Guam as part of the regional military buildup.

He said discussions are already ongoing to ensure that the programmatic agreement meets Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1996, which requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their projects on historic properties and give the ACHP an opportunity to comment.

Faisao maintained, however, that the Commonwealth should have a separate programmatic agreement since Guam and the CNMI are "two separate but equal sovereign entities."

The DCCA secretary also disputed the analysis of the legal counsel of the Department of Defense who said that the direct federal funding cannot be provided to the CNMI Historic Preservation Office.

"[The] CNMI will continue to embark on requesting federal funding assistance from the U.S. government as governed by the Covenant," Faisao told *Saipan Tribune*.

Additionally, Faisao said he will request the Department of Defense to include small businesses in the CNMI in the bidding process for publication of any historical or archaeological reports as part of the programmatic agreement. ***(Clarissa V. David)***

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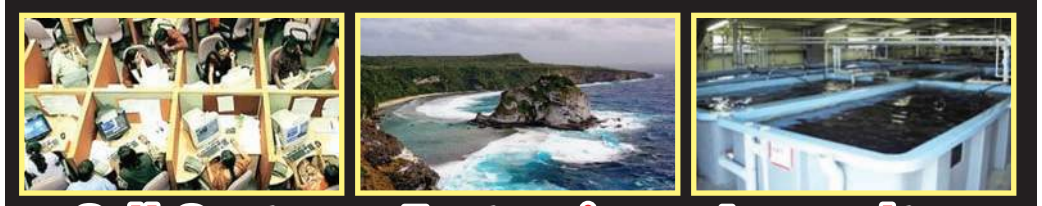

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A weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority
Tourism is everybody's business.

On Friday, March 11, 2011, an 8.9-magnitue earthquake occurred in northern Japan, causing subsequent tsunamis in the area and throughout the Pacific. The following is a preliminary report from Marianas Visitors Authority's (MVA) office in Japan to headquarters on Monday, March 14:

"While there were a number of aftershocks over the weekend, all of our Japan staff and our office are fine, and the Japan office continues with business as usual despite the devastation seen in the north of Japan several hundred miles away.

The after-shocks from the earthquake continue, but the frequency and intensity is much reduced. As you may have heard, as a result of the earthquake, nuclear power plants have been taken offline in the north of Japan, and some evacuations within 10 km. of the power plants have taken place. While there is no danger of radiation here in Tokyo, the reduced output may not be enough to meet demand. Our office is not included in scheduled blackout zones, but they may affect some of our media, travel trade and other partners based outside Tokyo. Likewise, some of Tokyo's trains running to outlying areas are somewhat affected by the reduced power output, so some sales calls to distant travel trade partners will need to be postponed.

Japan's four major airports of Haneda, Narita, Osaka, and Nagoya are all fully operational. We expect tour cancelation numbers to come in over the next few days, and at this point travel agents and airlines are waiving all cancelation fees. A number of flights (especially domestic flights) have been canceled to the most affected areas (Sendai, Iwate, Aomori, Akita and Ibaraki).

The Sendai airport was completely covered by the tsunami and will take months to restore to regular operations. Please note that the airport had no direct flights to the Northern Marianas. The number of visitors from Tohoku centered on Sendai to Saipan was about 8,000 in 2010, according to data from CNMI Customs Declaration Forms, and arrivals from the affected area can be expected to be limited for the coming several months as the region rebuilds. As for cancellations from the rest of Japan not directly affected by the earthquake, including our three key gateway markets of Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya, although it was a difficult situation to ask travel agents for the exact number of the cancellations in the past three days , they said, as all flights from Narita for Friday and Saturday had been cancelled, consumers had to stand by. As for Nagoya and Osaka, there was only little influence due to earthquake. Delta (Air Line) flight operation from Narita returned to normal on Sunday. And to accommodate passengers who were boarding the flights for Saipan on Friday and Saturday to Saipan, Delta changed to a large size aircraft. Although travel agents do not tell how many passengers cancelled their travel, it is most likely that some cancellations will be made until end of this month.

The re-building effort will represent a significant drain on Japan's economy and national psyche—and naturally this impact cannot yet be estimated at this point—but the Japanese people are extremely resilient, and there is a single-minded focus in Japan on picking up the pieces and re-building, as was the case following the Kobe earthquake a decade ago.

Many thanks for your support during this severe time for Japan. We will send another update later this week as the situation develops and as feedback from our key travel trade partners continues to come in."

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This Tourism Tuesday space is provided by Saipan Tribune

Regents adopt show-cause report; no NMC president yet

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College is expected to submit today its show-cause report to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges after the Board of Regents approved yesterday the over 200-page document that details why the college should be allowed to retain its accreditation.

WASC had given the college until today, March 15, to submit the show-cause report.

NMC, however, remains without a permanent president yet.

Board chair Juan T. Lizama described the show-cause report as a "good product" that reflects the greater involvement of college stakeholders.

"As we reviewed the document, we sensed that there is a greater involvement in the whole product," Lizama told *Saipan Tribune*.

He said the board is optimistic of the commission's positive response, which is expected soon.

The commission placed NMC under continued show-cause status in January after the college failed to sufficiently address the 10 concerns it had cited in the previous show-cause order.

NMC has yet to appoint a permanent president pending the outcome of a second search. The college has had no chief executive officer since the departure of Dr. Carmen Fernandez in January 2010.

Lizama said the board completed last week its interview of the top three candidates. However, the board is still waiting for the background checks on the candidates, which is being done for the college by the Association of Community College Trustees.

Of the 31 initial candidates, the ACCT endorsed to the board seven for interview. The number was trimmed down to five after two withdrew their applications. The pool now has only three candidates for final selection.

Lizama refused to disclose the names of the top three candidates, pending the decision of the board. He said ACCT is expected to turn in the requested documents today and that a special meeting may be called as soon as that happens.

Trial of suspected 'ice' supplier begins

The jury trial of a suspected major supplier of methamphetamine or "ice" began yesterday in Superior Court with the selection of seven jurors, including one alternate.

Suspect Jing Xin Xiao was arrested last year at a raid in Papago where officers reportedly recovered some of the illegal drugs buried in his backyard.

His trial, presided by Superior Court Associate Judge David Wiseman, will continue today, Tuesday, at 8:30am with some legal issues to be tackled by the opposing counsels. Opening statements by the prosecution and the defense counsel are then expected to follow.

Assistant attorneys general Russell Lorfing and Peter Prestley are prosecuting the case. Chief public defender Adam Hardwicke and assistant public defender Adam Miles are representing Xiao.

The Office of the Attorney General has charged Xiao with trafficking of a controlled substance and illegal possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance.

Police said they were able to seize over 230 grams of "ice" with a street value of $118,250 during the raid on April 7, 2010, at Xiao's house and backyard in Papago.

It was reportedly the largest drug bust that the Department of Public Safety conducted without the help of the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Detective Steven A. Castro stated in his report that some of the "ice" were concealed in a container that was buried in a three-inch hole in Xiao's backyard.

Castro said they searched Xiao's backyard because a "confidential defendant" had told them that the illegal drugs were buried. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Ogumoro back as range master; not as DPS deputy commissioner

Ambrosio T. Ogumoro has been reinstated as the CNMI's range master, according to Department of Public Safety Commissioner Santiago F. Tudela.

Tudela told *Saipan Tribune* over the weekend that the administration renewed Ogumoro's contract as range master "a couple of months ago."

Tudela, however, stressed that Ogumoro did not get back his previous position as DPS deputy commissioner.

As range master, Ogumoro is in charge of recertifying law enforcers to handle guns.

"I have no problem with that," said Tudela, referring to Ogumoro's reinstatement.

Tudela first terminated Ogumoro as deputy chief on May 19, 2010, but Gov. Benigno R. Fitial reinstated him on July 7, 2010.

In November 2010, Tudela again terminated Ogumoro, this time saying that Ogumoro's contract as range master had expired on Sept. 30, 2010, and was not renewed and that his appointment as deputy chief was never completed.

DPS spokesman Tom Blas told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that as a range master, Ogumoro has a big responsibility. Aside from issuing certifications to law enforcers and civilian gun owners, he will also be assigned to maintain and upgrade the DPS range in Marpi.

Blas said Ogumoro is also involved in conducting educational awareness program on gun laws and gun safety in the CNMI. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Presenters for Sweet Potato Fest finalized

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

The Rota Mayor's Office has already identified the presenters for the various workshops that will be conducted during the inaugural Sweet Potato Festival.

In collaboration with the Rota Marketing Cooperative Association, Women in Action Association, Rota legislative delegation, and the 13th Rota Municipal Council, the first Sweet Potato Festival is scheduled on March 15 to 18 at the Metkaon Luta Ground in Sinapalo Village.

The festival aims to promote Rota's No. 1 crop as well as invite experts to discuss ways to process and market sweet potato to spur economic activity on the island and generate more income for farmers.

Special assistant for administration Efrain Atalig disclosed that most of the presenters will come from the Northern Marianas College-Cooperative Research Extension and Education Services.

The sweet potato food processing and marketing development value-added workshop is scheduled on March 15. Presenters are NMC-CREES food scientist Dr. Jan King, farmer and rancher Asap Ogumoro, and University of Guam extension agent Peter Barcinas.

The scheduled workshop on March 16 will discuss sweet potato production, harvest, post-harvest, and handling. Speakers include NMC-CREES plant pathologist Dr. Dilip Nandwani, entomologist Dr. Marisol Quintanilla, animal scientist Dr. Allan Sabaldica, Farm Service Agency county executive director Thomas Camacho, and U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development area director Joseph Diego.

The festival will feature demonstrations on various ways to prepare sweet potatoes and other sweet potato contests, with island-style entertainment and booths throughout the event.

Following the festival is the annual San Isidro Fiesta, the patron saint of farmers and the Sinapalo Village.

"We're inviting residents from neighboring islands to join us for the first Sweet Potato Festival. It's going to be a lot of fun," Atalig told *Saipan Tribune*.

For more information, call Steve Mesngon at 532-4046 or Julie Calvo at 532-9351.

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‘Green energy’ project kicks off at Saipan Southern High

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

In two to three months, Saipan Southern High School will be able to produce its own electricity, enough to power the entire campus. This “green energy” project is expected to be replicated in 10 other public schools on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Yesterday marked the groundbreaking for six 95-feet wind turbines and 95 solar panels at Saipan Southern High School.

These are in addition to the single wind turbine and solar panels already installed and operating on campus.

Upon completion of the project, SSHS will be able to harness as much as 165 kilowatts, enough solar and wind power to run the whole school, said Chris Fryling of N15 Architects, which bagged the construction management contract for the project.

Acting governor Eloy S. Inos and Education Commissioner Rita Sablan led the groundbreaking, along with other government officials, private sector partners, students, and parents.

“PSS is leading the way in green energy,” Sablan said.

Inos, for his part, said the savings realized from not having to pay for utilities will be used for instructional and other educational materials, among other things.

Former SSHS principal Craig Garrison, who championed alternative energy at his former campus, said SSHS has become an iconic school in the Pacific region not only because of the award-winning Manta Ray Band but also because of its green energy projects. Garrison is now principal of Marianas High School.

The CNMI Division of Energy received $6.5 million from the U.S. Department of Energy for renewable projects, $2.4 million of which was given to the Public School System for the installation of wind turbines and solar panels at 11 schools.

The contract has been awarded to N15 Architects, while the contractor is Pacific-green Integrated Technology Inc. The supplier of materials is Pacific Wind and Solar LLC.

SSHS principal Jesse Tudela said the groundbreaking is just the first of many green energy projects that will be started in different schools, thanks to federal grants.

“It’s a good week for SSHS,” he said, referring to the groundbreaking for the energy project and Manta Ray Band’s success at the Tumon Bay Music Festival in Guam last weekend. Manta Ray Band brought home five gold, 12 silver and one bronze medals.

Sablan announced that PSS will make available $10,000 for Manta Ray’s trip to London for the 2012 Olympics, after performing at the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

When it was the acting governor’s turn to deliver his remarks, he also pledged $15,000 for Manta Ray’s London trip, for a total of $25,000.

MARKET

From Page 1

In the Commonwealth, the Marianas Visitors Authority registered only 191,111 visitors from Japan in fiscal year 2009—from September 2008 to October 2009.

The number was even more dismal in fiscal year 2010, when only 185,032 Japanese visited the islands.

MVA managing director Perry Tenorio blames the low arrivals from Japan mainly on the lack of air seats to the islands, contributing to other factors that influence the visitors’ decision.

“We used to enjoy about 50 percent market share in terms of visitors from Japan, but it was affected by the lack of air seats. As far as demand, I think the demand is there, but sometimes it’s really the air services that are not there,” said Tenorio.

At present, there are 17 flights each week from Japanese cities. This may go down, however, to 14 a week if nighttime flights are called off starting next month. Some hotels on island are already bracing for this possibility but MVA has yet to confirm if this is going to happen.

According to deputy managing director Judy C. Torres, the CNMI used to enjoy seven to 10 flights from various cities in Japan via Continental Airlines. Majority of these were from Narita while the rest were from secondary cities.

Continental, however, began chipping away at the number of flights it was sending the CNMI’s way even before the pullout of Japan Airlines in 2005.

Torres said that MVA was already seeing a “significant reduction” in air seats to the islands before 2005.

“Even prior to that, we were already seeing that direct flight from Japan via Continental were pulling out little by little,” said Torres.

Guam air seats

MVA vice chair Yoichi Matsumura told *Saipan Tribune* that the higher number of flights to Guam explains why the U.S. territory has a bigger slice of the Japanese market than the CNMI.

“Guam has more flights and more air seats from the market. They offer flexible schedule of flights, bringing more comfort to the visitors. When a market enjoys the service of many airlines, competitions come in, resulting in cheaper costs of airfares,” said Matsumura.

Although the CNMI enjoys a better brand as a “paradise” destination, Matsumura said that most Japanese travelers see Guam as a more “accessible and flexible” place to visit.

“Satisfaction among repeat visitors is much higher in Guam than the CNMI, which doesn’t have enough air seats [and] a higher airfare cost as result of no competition [among airlines],” he added.

Matsumura disclosed that, based on numerous exit polls conducted among visitors to the islands, “they want to come back…they love the place, but we have not enough flights to accommodate them.”

Different experiences

Although both Guam and the CNMI separately promote their islands as “paradise” resort destinations, Tenorio said each one offers different types of experiences.

“Guam is a little bit more concrete while the CNMI is a little bit more green. Yes, we are both resort destinations, but we offer different travel products to visitors,” he said.

Palau arrivals

Compared to Palau, the CNMI enjoys a slight advantage in terms of Japanese arrivals but we could lose even that small edge if Palau gets more air seats.

In calendar year 2009, the Palau Visitors Authority recorded 71,887 tourist arrivals, of which 37 percent—or 26,688—were from Japan. In calendar year 2010, Palau recorded a slight increase in arrivals, 85,593, of which 34 percent or 29,318 visitors were from the Japan market.

“Our advantage over Palau is the same advantage of Guam over us. We have more planes and air seats coming into the island,” said Tenorio.

It must be noted, though, that Delta Air Lines has already begun non-stop service from Tokyo to Palau. This early, Fly Guam, a new airline, already has plans to launch an airline called Fly Marianas that will fly the Saipan-Guam-Palau route. More news like these and the CNMI’s small advantage over Palau could be erased, unless efforts are made now to increase the number of air seats to the CNMI.

Japan market

Since the 1990s, with arrivals from Japan continuing to decline little by little, MVA began introducing mixed markets into the tourism industry with the hope that increased arrivals from other markets would offset the loss from Japan.

However, tourism officials point out that that is happening too slowly to make much of a difference. Despite the other source markets—Korea, China, Russia, and other destinations—Japan remains the most frequent visitors in the islands.

“Since the beginning of the industry, our source market is Japan. When we started to diversify our mixed markets, we still see big numbers from our top market. I think the general consensus of the board then, was to keep our Japan market as a source country while we promote our islands to other destinations. Just by looking at the history and data, Japanese remains on top of our arrivals up to this time,” said Tenorio.

Because many businesses on island are owned by Japanese nationals since the start, Tenorio said this also helps attract more Japanese visitors to the islands.

New strategic plan

In 2006, a five-year strategic plan for CNMI tourism was created, highlighting the efforts and plans of the government and how it could arrest the continued decline in Japanese arrivals.

Various ad-hoc committees were formed to help initiate steps in the recovery plans, including the enhancement and development of new sites.

However, many of these plans and projects were not realized and did not progress as a result of budget constraints, Tenorio said.

“Product development is always a concern for MVA. The destination enhancement ad-hoc committee, for example, wants to develop the Kalavera Cave or do some shading at Paseo de Marianas. But the challenges that we had is funding because this should come from a local source,” said Tenorio.

That five-year strategic plan had targeted one million tourist arrivals from 2006 through 2010. That did not happen.

This year, a new strategic tourism plan is in the works.

“When we did the 2006-2010 strategic plan, the CNMI still enjoyed control of its own immigration system. That’s no longer the case at present when federalization kicked in in November 2009. We have to assess the impact of this factor in our emerging markets,” he said.

Tenorio said the new strategic plan will show a better picture of CNMI tourism in regards to type of visitors it needs, activities that lure visitors, and the motivational activities during the low and peak seasons for travelers.

“For every dollar the CNMI spends [to attract tourists], other countries spend $6 to $15 more per person than we do. That’s the reality. In terms of promotional investments to attract more visitors to come, we’re left behind,” he added.

MVA, whose primary function is to focus on the islands’ tourism and promotions, was allocated just $6.1 million in fiscal year 2010. This fiscal year, the agency got the same amount despite submitting a budget request of $10.5 million to effectively carry out its promotional campaigns. Guam, on the other hand, had an operating budget of $12.19 million in fiscal year 2010.

The budget dilemma has also resulted in the shutting down of some offshore offices in other destinations, which hampers the agency’s efforts in promoting the Commonwealth.

Tomorrow: Tourism trouble in paradise: Now what?

THREAT

From Page 1

affected nuclear power plants in the areas of Japan that have experienced extensive damage as a result of Friday’s earthquake and tsunami.

“One thing I’d like to stress is that the general public need not panic under these conditions. We’re doing everything possible. We’re communicating with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration or NOAA. They’re the folks that are looking at these things and so we’re in constant communication. We’re putting together a plan and we will do the best we could under this situation,” Inos said in an interview at the groundbreaking for wind turbines and solar panels at Saipan Southern High School.

He recalled a training exercise back in the mid- to late-’50s, in the wake of the radioactive fallout from a series of nuclear weapons testing on the Bikini and Enewetak Atolls in the Marshall Islands.

People suffered from major health problems as a result of those radioactive fallout.

“It’s been a while [since those training] so we’re ready to do a plan to respond to these things. That’s just to be on the safe side, although reports indicate that there’s really no immediate threat to the Commonwealth, but were not taking chances. This is a nature/natural situation; the wind direction, weather condition, we don’t control those. So we just have to be prepared,” Inos said.

In Japan, hundreds of thousands of people living near nuclear plants with partial meltdown have been ordered to evacuate.

In a separate statement, the administration said in accordance with the latest official updates, “the local government has confirmed that there are no indications of imminent threats to the Northern Mariana Islands at this time.”

It also ensured the public that emergency response personnel “have been duly dedicated to stay on top of this ongoing situation.”

“I want to assure the people of the Commonwealth that we have fully heightened our alertness to the situation in Japan. At this time, I am urging everyone to remain calm and vigilant as we continue to follow this situation,” Inos said in a statement.

He added, “While we have received clear indications that there are no immediate threats at this point, we continue to exert efforts to ensure that we have adequate access to preparedness equipment and supplies in the event that a threat arises.”

The government also urges the community to take guidance from official communications being disseminated through local media sources as new developments arise.

“In these times, there is a tendency for an increased circulation of rumors or inconsistent information floating in the community,” the statement added.

INOS

From Page 1

and to show they care.

“This is a gesture of goodwill and cooperation. There’s nothing to lose. This is showing a lot of goodwill, our appreciation to the Japanese people,” Inos said in an interview after leading the groundbreaking for new wind turbines and solar panels at the Saipan Southern High School in Koblerville yesterday morning.

He said the CNMI government is finalizing this plan, with the Marianas Visitors Authority as lead agency at this time or until another entity is identified to champion the program.

The plan will include registration of families here that are willing to participate in the program to host affected Japanese families until they are able to recover or return to their country.

Inos said the program would be similar to the concept of the CNMI-Japanese student exchange program, only this time it would be open not only to students but to families or individuals affected by the tragedy in Japan.

“We are financially constrained to provide financial assistance but we could reach out in our own way, help these people out with shelter and food,” he said.

The official death toll from the Japan quake and tsunami reached 1,647 on Monday, CNN reports. The toll is expected to rise as search and recovery efforts continue.

Jack Atalig, a concerned citizen, said yesterday that he is more than willing to accommodate or host Japanese families affected by the tragedy who would like to relocate to the CNMI.

“I’m asking everyone to open your heart for those affected by what happened in Japan. …If there’s a place where these people could relocate, it should be on a U.S. soil, and it should be us. …We should always be willing to help,” he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Atalig said the threat of radioactive fallout from explosions at nuclear plants in Japan is another reason for CNMI residents to consider hosting Japanese families.

He said the CNMI could also be a “clearing point,” as it was during the Vietnam War, for those who want to relocate to the U.S. although this instance at a time of peace.

The acting governor also said the government would like to coordinate this program with the Japan Consulate to the CNMI and with airlines that may be interested in giving discounted or free airfare to Japanese families who may want to temporarily relocate to the CNMI as a result of Friday’s tragedy.

“Notwithstanding what happened during the war, they’ve contributed a lot to our economic development, to our tourism industry and so we’d like in any way possible to do something good,” said Inos.

Japan is the CNMI’s major tourism market.

Inos, along with Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan, earlier issued a public statement of prayers and sympathy for Japan and the Japanese people in the wake of the earthquake and tsunami.

Others who also would like to help or donate to the victims of the Japan tragedy could visit www.redcross.org or drop by the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter office at the Saipan airport area to drop off their donation.

Diego calls on fellow lawmakers not to lift the ban on net fishing

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

House minority leader Diego T. Benavente (R-Saipan) is asking his fellow lawmakers to consider not supporting the lifting of a net fishing ban on Saipan as proposed by House Bill 17-136, citing its negative impacts on the CNMI people, the economy, and sustainability of the islands' natural resources.

"Contrary to HB 17-136's intentions for providing assistance in an economically stressed time, passage of this bill would only hurt our economic conditions even further," Benavente said in his three-page "dear colleague letter."

He asked his colleagues to return HB 17-136 to the Natural Resources Committee for further investigation, allow for proper public comment and presentation of scientific input before allowing the bill to be placed on the agenda for vote.

Benavente, a fisherman for over 20 years, said that lifting the net fishing ban is a step backward for the CNMI's efforts to increase its fish stock since banning net fishing more than 10 years ago.

"Adding any increased fishing pressure now will only send us backwards, further reducing the stocks and resulting in fewer fish very fast. Until scientific data shows us that we are clear from the dangerous impact of surround net or any type of net fishing, we cannot in good conscience allow this to resume," Benavente said, citing a January 2011 report on the Marianas Archipelago Fishery Ecosystem Plan.

Benavente is also the author of the law that bans shark finning in the CNMI, earning the Commonwealth international accolades for its shark conservation efforts.

HB 17-136, introduced by Rep. Sylvester Iguel (Cov-Saipan), said that, although the net fishing ban was created for conservation purposes, it is necessary to take into consideration the economic crisis that people now face.

His proposal is to lift the net fishing ban on Saipan for only five years, and only for subsistence purposes and not for commercial fishing.

"Any sales or distribution beyond one's immediate family shall be a violation of this law," said Iguel.

Iguel said many government employees are now subjected to unpaid holidays and 16-hour cut per payroll, while private sector employees are also faced with similar work hour cuts and even furloughs. He also cited the increasing utility costs and fuel prices.

But Benavente said surround net and other net fishing are, by design, a way to catch large volumes of fish.

"It is an insult to the intelligence of our people to suggest that these volumes would not be sold commercially and only be allowed for non-commercial, subsistence purposes. In fact, allowing the passage of 17-136 will only benefit a handful of people and potentially open our resources to further exploitation by outside sources, even if unintentionally," he said.

Benavente said being a fisherman since his younger years, he can personally attest to the decline in the fish population. He said when he was a boy, there was an abundance of fish and all forms of fishing were permitted.

His father was the first to introduce the Okinawan style of gill net fishing and to bring Okinawan fishermen to Saipan to work for him.

"Using the Okinawan fishermen and hiring local fishermen, he was able to run his market successfully seven days a week. In fact, I followed in his steps buying boats, running a market, and selling our daily catch for more than 20 years. Today, our fish stocks are depleted, my boat is sold and my fish market is closed," he said.

Over 10 years ago, Benavente supported the passage of the original Fair Fishing Act, which banned net fishing and Scuba spear fishing "because we could plainly see the obvious decline in our fish populations" and the damage in coral reefs and the lagoon.

The CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife conducted a study in 2004 to 2007 with data results showing that the number of fish is increasing and their sizes are bigger compared with data from the time before the Fair Fishing Act was implemented.

Benavente said he would also counter any reports or suggestions by the Western Regional Fisheries Management Council that the CNMI's fishing resources are underutilized.

He said WRFMC's model or their use of mathematics is based on total resources from Rota all the way to Uracas, which cannot provide accurate information by which to gauge the individual islands' resources.

"Perhaps some of our neighboring islands can withstand additional fishing pressure, but the scientific evidence is clear for Saipan and that we cannot afford to allow a return to any type of net fishing practices at this time," he added.

Saipan mayor condoles with quake, tsunami victims

Saipan Mayor Donald G. Flores expressed his deepest sympathies to Japan Consul General for the CNMI Tsutomo Higuchi for those who have been devastated by the recent earthquake and tsunami in Japan.

A powerful 8.9-magnitude earthquake hit Japan Friday afternoon, triggering a 30-foot tsunami that swept away cars, boats, homes, and people in the northeastern part of the country.

According to Flores, close relationships have been established between Saipan and Japan through the various cultural exchange programs that help promote friendship and goodwill between sister cities.

"Because close ties have been cemented and continually nurtured by constantly keeping in touch and caring for one another, a devastation like last Friday's truly affects us here [on] Saipan," said the mayor.

Flores encouraged residents of Saipan "to join together" and provide both financial and in-kind donations to the earthquake and tsunami victims through the American Red Cross via its website at www.redcross.org or at their local office along Airport Road.

"We continue to offer our prayers and condolences to the people of Japan and we wish for a speedy recovery," he added. ***(Clarissa V. David)***

Inos appoints 2 to NMC, Licensing boards

Acting governor Eloy S. Inos appointed former Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance consultant William S. Torres to the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents, and Carmen H. Atalig to the Professional Licensing Board.

Inos submitted Torres' and Atalig's names to Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) on Friday, the same day he formally informed the two of their appointees.

The appointments need the advice and consent of the Senate.

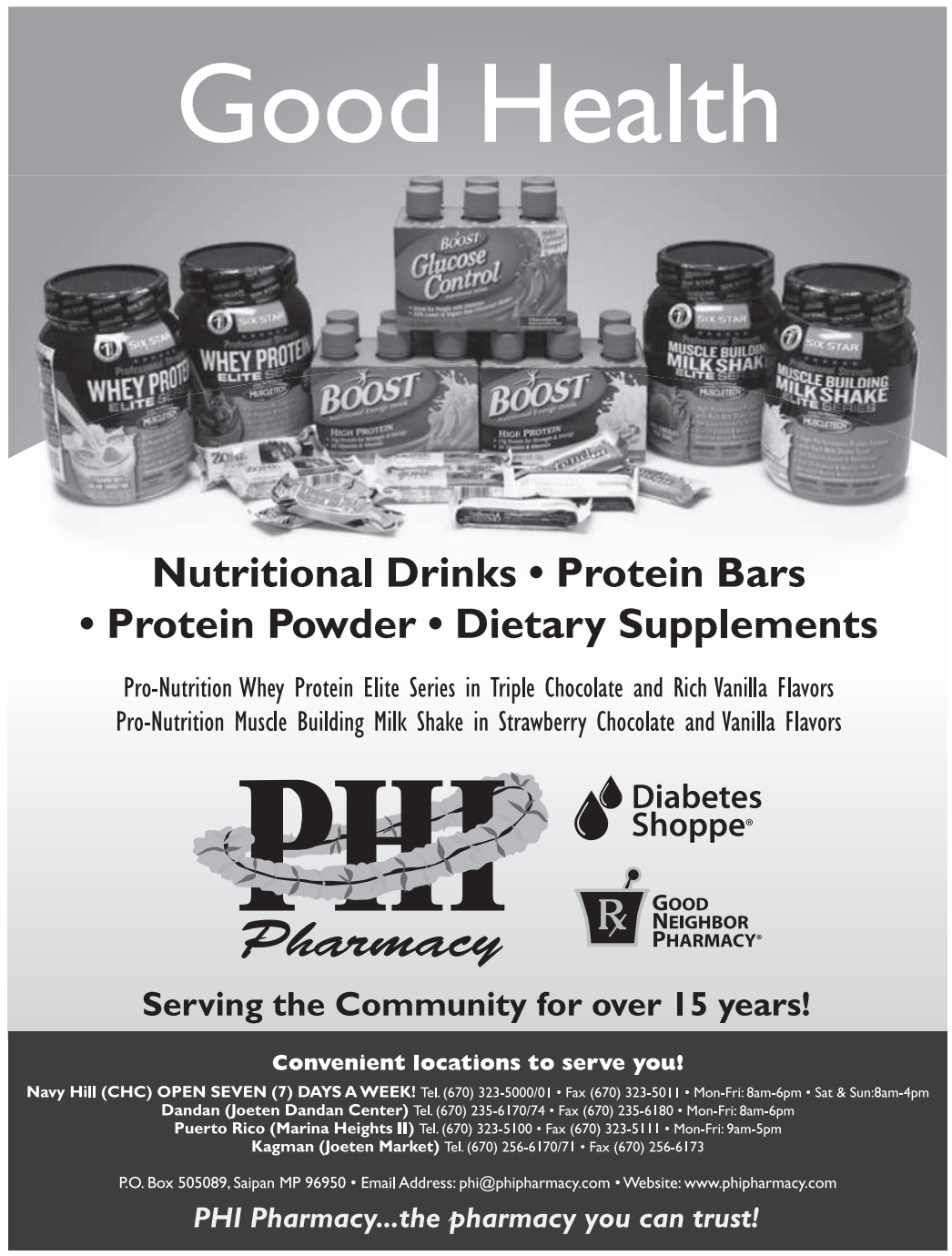
Torres, once confirmed, will serve the remainder of the term left vacant by former NMC board chair Paz Younis up to June 27, 2013.

"The governor and I are confident that Mr. Torres is qualified and will be an asset on this important board," Inos told Manglona.

The acting governor also told the same thing about Atalig.

Torres will represent Saipan/private sector on the NMC Board of Regents, while Atalig will represent Rota on the Professional Licensing Board if confirmed by the Senate.

Inos asked the two appointees to immediately file a statement of financial interests with the Office of the Public Auditor, and to submit to the governor's office a copy of their resume, police clearance, drug test receipt and drug test result, and statement of financial interest. ***(Haidee V. Eugenio)***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NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY of COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDS for PROGRAM YEAR 2011 and NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

This advertisement is paid for by NMHC with CPD Funds.

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, through the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is announcing the availability of $1,591,011.00 in Community Planning and Development (CPD) funds available from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. NMHC anticipates receiving $880,151.00 in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); $647,474 Home Investment Partnership (HOME); and, $63,386.00 Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) funds for Program Year (PY) 2011.

The CDBG funds, authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, may be used for a wide range of community development activities to revitalize neighborhoods, provide affordable housing, expand economic opportunities, and improve community facilities and services. However, use of these funds must meet at least one of the national objectives which include: 1) to benefit low and moderate-income families; 2) to eliminate slum or blight conditions; or 3) to meet other urgent community development needs.

The CDBG program requires a grant recipient to certify that it will minimize displacement of persons as a result of activities assisted with CDBG funds. The CNMI government does not plan on undertaking any activity which will cause displacement of persons. In the event of any unforeseen displacement resulting from any CDBG funded activity, the CNMI government will comply with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, its implementing regulation and applicable local law.

HOME funds may be used to create affordable housing through financing assistance, site acquisition or improvement, and rehabilitating existing residential dwellings as well as providing funds for new construction or purchase of a single-family residential dwelling. Use of HOME funds must benefit low-income families.

ESG funds may be used to rehabilitate or convert buildings into homeless shelters and for shelter operating expenses, supportive services and homeless prevention activities. Use of ESG funds must benefit the homeless.

Information concerning eligibility uses of the grant funds may be obtained upon request at the respective offices of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) located on Garapan, Saipan; San Jose, Village, Tinian; and, Songsong Village, Rota.

In order to plan ahead as to the use(s) of the PY 2011 allocation, the NMHC will be conducting hearings to obtain public input on community development and housing needs, and to provide information to the public on the status of the approved ongoing CDBG projects. The public hearings will be held as follows:

1. **On Rota, April 11, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. at the NMHC Office, Songsong Village;**
2. **On Tinian, April 12, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. at the CDA/NMHC Office in San Jose Village; and,**
3. **On Saipan, April 13, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan.**

Accommodations for disabled individuals or other non-English speaking individuals who wish to attend the public hearing is available upon request by giving at least 24 hours notice prior to the meeting so that such needs can be arranged and provided. Additional inquiries concerning the CDBG program may be directed in writing to the Corporate Director, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P.O. 500514, Saipan, MP. 96950, or by calling Zenie P. Mafnas, Grant Writer/Planner at 234-6866 or 234-7689.

/s/ **Joshua T. Sasamoto**
Corporate Director

"NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer"

Do Re Mi musicians bag four golds in Guam tilt

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Do Re Mi School of Music is having a banner year this 2011 after its students brought home four gold medals from the recently concluded Tumon Bay Music Festival in Guam.

School founder and professional violinist Ao Zhang shared the school's achievements with the *Saipan Tribune* Sunday, saying he is particularly proud of Tatiana Joy Ada-Calvo, the school's first delegate to the festival who made it big in the solo performance.

Ada-Calvo, who has been playing violin since she was 6 years old, was a first-timer at the Tumon Bay musical competition. She amazed judges and spectators with her solo rendition of *Mendelssohn Concerto E Minor 3rd Movement*, which earned her the gold medal in the open division.

The 16-year-old described her achievement as priceless and overwhelming, dedicating her Guam victory to her grandfather, the late Francisco Castro Ada, whose passion for classical music lives on in her performances.

Ada-Calvo, who prepared for the competition for three months, is the daughter of Esther Ada. She has performed in numerous events on Saipan and has played with the Saipan Southern High School's Manta Ray Band and Pacific Winds in the past.

She said she loves playing violin because it's a unique instrument, difficult to play, and teaches her discipline and the value of hard work.

"It's very soothing…and I love doing it," she said.

Besides Ada-Calvo, Do Re Mi's brother-and-sister tandem, Zhen Yu Su and Xiao Mei Su, were also awarded gold medals for solo violin performance and duet performance. The two are the children of Hong Zhao Chen.

Fourteen-year-old Zhen Yu Su played *Carmen Fantasy* by Pablo D. Sarasate in the solo performance category and joined his sister to play *Navarra* by N. Sarasate in the duet violin or small ensemble category. Both performances were awarded gold medals. The two spent almost three months in rehearsals.

Overwhelmed by their achievement, 16-year-old Xiao Mei Su said the festival is a great opportunity for young musicians in the region.

"Everyone gained a lot of experience from it and it was really a great opportunity for us to show our talents and just enjoy the music," she told *Saipan Tribune*.

Unlike other musical instruments, Xiao Mei Su said the sound of the violin captures her heart.

"It captures my heart and other people's hearts. Unlike other types of music, classical for me will always be there," she said.

This was the second time for 14-year-old Zhen Yu Su to perform at the Tumon Bay Music Festival. He also won gold in his division in 2009. Last year, Zhen Yu Su also emerged winner in the Guam's Young Artists Competition and has played with the Guam Symphony Orchestra.

Playing the violin, he said, helps him express his emotions and feelings. Yu started playing the instrument when he was 6.

The school's fourth gold medal was awarded to 10-year-old Alan Tudela, who played *Concerto No. 1 in A Minor* in the solo violin category. He is the son of Hua Tudela and the late Alejandro C. Tudela.

"I am very happy…and I enjoyed the experience," he said, adding that he was happy to turn in a good performance despite the last-minute preparation.

Tudela was also a winner in the Guam's Young Artists Competition last year. It is his dream to become a music conductor.

For Do Re Mi owner and violin expert Ao Zhang, the students' achievements are the fruits of all their hard work and sacrifices.

"I am extremely proud of them. Just seeing how they work hard for almost nine hours of rehearsals each day, I can say that they truly deserve the honor. This year is so special for us because all our delegates to four categories have won first place and it's truly amazing. I am also proud and happy for Tatiana who is the first local student from our school who made it big in the Guam event. I hope they will continue to love music," said Zhang.

He also recognized the school's pianist, Jihae Yeom, who accompanied the students in their solo performances.

MONETH G. DEPOSA

Do Re Mi founder Ao Zhang, center standing, poses with the gold medal winners at the Tumon Bay Music Festival. Seated, from left, are Xiao Mei Su and Tatiana Ada-Calvo. Standing are Alan Tudela, Ao Zhang, and Zhen Yu Su. The four students emerged gold medal awardees in their respective categories.

'Geotourism Conversations' end today

Members of the CNMI community will have two final occasions to participate in community conversations featuring Jonathan Tourtellot, National Geographic fellow and founding director of the Center for Sustainable Destinations. Tourtellot will share information on geo-tourism principles, trends, and potential opportunities for the CNMI.

Geo-tourism is defined as tourism "that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents."

On Tinian, the conversation will take place at the Tinian Public Library at 9am. On Saipan, the council's popular Community Lecture Series will feature Tourtellot at the American Memorial Park Visitors Center Theatre at 6:30pm.

For more information, contact the council at 235-4785 or visit the council website at www.nmihumanities.org. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BID
CUC-IFB-11-027

REHABILITATION OF SEWER LIFT STATION NOS. S-2 & S-8

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the rehabilitation and upgrade of Sewer Lift Stations and installation of Force-Main in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project consists, in general of the rehabilitation and upgrade of Two (2) Sewer Lift Stations and the installation approximately 1,300 foot of force-main. The work shall be done not to disrupt the daily operation of the sewer discharge. The work is inclusive of rehabilitation of the wet well, replacement of pumps, guide rails, control panel cleanup of the basins, repair, replacement, rehabilitation of pipeline, pipes, replacement of generator, asphalt paving, etc. CUC requires the Project to be completed in **180 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

The Bid Package and Scope-of-Work may be picked-up, upon receipt of a deposit from the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check, in the amount of $ 100.00 (nonrefundable) for one set; at the CUC, Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room 4, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan, between 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM and 12:30 PM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit will be held on **March 28, 2011 at 9:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.10, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Seven (7) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-11-027, **Rehabilitation of Sewer Lift Station Nos. S-2 & S-8"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 4, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on April 14, 2011**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 30 days after submission.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A Bid Guarantee of 15 percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. A Performance Bond of *one hundred (100%) percent* of the total proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. Surety company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC. A Payment Bond of *one hundred (100%) percent* of the total proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code. Please refer to other bidding requirements described in Document 00200 - Instructions to Bidders.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on April 7, 2011** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, Jr., CUC Purchasing Officer, via email - msablan@cucgov.net with a copy to Commander, Robert Lorenz, Water/Wastewater Engineer via email robert_lorenz@cucgov.net and Ms. Janina Mika Muna, Procurement & Supply, Administrative Support Assistant - mika_muna@cucgov.net.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

ABE UTU MALAE
Executive Director

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC
Proposed Amendments to the
Saipan Zoning Law and Official Zoning Maps

The Zoning Board has extended the deadline to receive your comments on a number of proposed amendments to the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008 and the accompanying Official Zoning Maps. Please join any of the following presentations to gain more understanding of the changes and let us know your comments before April 12, 2011.

PRESENTATIONS:

Wednesday, March 16, 2011 @ 2:00pm,
Zoning Board Conference Room
2nd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building

Wednesday, March 16, 2011 @ 6:00pm
Multi Purpose Center, Beach Road, Susupe

The proposed amendments and map changes may be viewed at the following locations:

Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Building, DanDan
Joeten-Kiyu Public Library
Zoning Board website: www.zoning.gov.mp (publications page)

Please call the Zoning Office for updated information regarding availability.

Comments on the proposed changes may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office and they must be received at the Zoning Office by 4:30pm Tuesday, April 12, 2011. Send written comments via e-mail to dwyatt@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or hand-deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearings, or if you require assistance, please contact the Zoning Office at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008.

/s/ Diego C. Blanco, Chairman

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Greg Elliott's latest paintings at 360

Resident artist Greg Elliott has been preparing to launch another one-man show. The reception and show will be held tomorrow, March 16, from 5pm to 9pm at the 360 Revolving Restaurant and will include happy-hour prices and free appetizers. All of the art being displayed will be for sale.

This show is a follow-up to Elliott's show at the 360 restaurant last year.

"I will have a selection of about 10 new paintings that will be added to the ones already at the restaurant, totaling about 26 paintings and prints. This year I'm very excited about getting some of my new works of Asia out so people can see them first-hand. The smaller paintings will be new works of Saipan but I will also have four large paintings of India, Bali, and Japan," he said.

Elliott

Elliott continues with his foray into acrylic but some of the new large-scale Asian pieces have a three-dimensional aspect to them.

"I have been studying new techniques being used with acrylics. There is a huge number of new products available that have come about in recent years by many of the suppliers. Now I have options of an incredible array of exciting effects like deep transparent clear gel layers, building up thick texture areas using palette knives and the ability to build in other materials into deep layers. It really just opens up my mind to endless creative directions. Also exciting are all the alternative types of paints such as metallic, iridescent, and inference colors available on the market. They allow for some parts of the painting to just glow and pop off of the surface and even shift colors at different viewing angles. I'm soon going to start experimenting, with building into my paintings intricately cut sheet metal designs using a plasma cutter. I would like to even start doing complete paintings onto sheets of metal and/or cutting metal frames. I'm striving for techniques and effects that are original, fresh, and exciting. I have so many concepts floating around in my head that would make interesting paintings from my travels around Asia and now I have the tools to bring my imagination to life. There is nothing I would rather be doing."

Elliott is a full-time artist, living on Saipan for the past eight years. His paintings are diverse, ranging from landscapes, seascapes, architecture, and figurative with themes ranging across the Pacific, Asia, and North America.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Picture is titled "Water," a 30" x 40" acrylic on Plexiglass. It is just one of the latest work of Saipan resident artist Greg Elliott that will be on exhibit at the 360 Revolving Restaurant starting tomorrow.

Elliott has been collected by individuals worldwide residing in North America, Hawaii, Saipan, Guam, Korea, Russia, and Japan.

In addition, he has produced many commissioned work for individuals and organizations including Proteus Sports LTD, London; Suzuki Motor Corp., California; Arizona Memorial Museum Association, Hawaii; and Ulsan Windsurfing Association, Korea, to name a few.

Elliott has also been teaching fine art classes for children ages 6-12, out of his studio on Capital Hill. To sign up for classes contact Elliott at 285-2899 or by email at greg@elliottartwork.com. To see his latest paintings in full-color and what he is currently up to, you can go to his website, www.elliottartwork.com. ***(PR)***

Judge denies allegedly wrong court ruling

The federal court stands pat in its previous rulings that it did not make a wrong determination in relation to the duration of the injury sustained by a fisherman who had sued after being run over by a motorboat in 2007.

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge William Fremming Nielsen last week denied Pedro Pinaula's third motion to amend the court's findings.

"The court has reviewed the briefing and the file and is fully informed," said Nielsen briefly in a one-page order.

He did not further explain his reasons for denying Pinaula's motion.

Pinaula, through counsel Joseph E. Horey, had filed a third motion for the court to amend its findings and rule that the duration of his injury was at least 11 months, instead of just six months.

In opposing the motion, defendants Banga Bandhu Baidya and Seahorse Inc. Saipan, through counsel Richard W. Pierce, said that, while the evidence shows that Pinaula possibly had some pain on some occasions as a result of the accident, he did not actively seek medical help for it and the court's estimate of six months is "reasonable, if not generous, based upon the quality of the evidence."

Pierce acknowledged that Pinaula did visit the physician three months after the accident but insists that he did so not for medical reasons but to satisfy his lawyer's needs for a claim against Seahorse.

The lawsuit arose from an accident on Aug. 25, 2007, when a boat being driven by Baidya ran over Pinaula, who was swimming and fishing with a sling in the shallow waters off Micro Beach mid-afternoon.

At a bench trial, Nielsen found negligence both on the part of Pinaula and the defendants but determined that Baidya's negligence caused Pinaula's injury. The judge found Baidya and Seahorse liable to pay Pinaula damages worth $3,600.

Nielsen said that based on Pinaula's account of the duration of injury as well as the medical records, the court estimates that his injury lasted about six months.

Pinaula disputes the judge's finding, first asserting that the actual duration of injury was 29 months or no less than 14 months if adjusted for mitigation.

Nielsen denied the motion. Pinaula, however, moved to amend the court's decision. The judge denied again the second motion. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

Belated happy birthday to Lea Reiann Dlc. Salalila, who celebrated her birthday last month, February 2011. Lots of love and many more birthdays to come. Greetings come from grandpa Romeo and grandma Agnes.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday greetings go out to Leo Ray DLC. Salalila, who is celebrating his birthday today, March 15, 2011! Lots of love and many more birthdays to come! Greetings come from grandpa Romeo and grandma Agnes.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Belated happy birthday greetings go out to Joseph Paraiso, who celebrated his birthday on March 12.We wish you good health and more birthdays to come. Love, Tita Osang and Tito Onching.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Mar. 15, 1999

BOE pursuing initiative for increased funding

The Board of Education will seek direct mandate from the voters in November to amend Article 15 of the CNMI Constitution and increase the annual guaranteed funding for the Public School System from 15 percent to 25 percent. Board member Thomas Pangelinan reminded colleagues that the CNMI election is scheduled on November 6 and by this time PSS should be getting ready with its proposal to amend the Constitution. "Let's do what Nike always say, just do it," he said. According to Pangelinan, recent survey shows the CNMI has a total of 12,400 voters. The PSS will need the endorsement from at least 20 percent of the total registered voters before moving on to the certification process required in presenting a popular initiative in an election.

FAA steps up security training

The Federal Aviation Administration will continue to provide trainings and seminars in the CNMI to help the Commonwealth Ports Authority in maintaining airport security. According to Arthur Bell, manager, Civil Aviation Security Field Office in Honolulu, the recently held one-week training on Saipan included not only the airport employees but the airline personnel as well since FAA believes that the maintenance of security in Saipan International Airport is a team effort that must be carried out by all the people concerned. At the same time, agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation helped provide the training for hijacking and bombing incidents. Due to increased activities of terrorist groups, FAA requires civil aviation security personnel to increase alertness by adding patrol sin plainclothes throughout the airport.

Mar. 15, 2000

State of emergency in Alamagan extended anew

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has extended anew the declaration of disaster emergency in the CNMI in the wake of the continued threat of a major volcanic eruption in Alamagan, an island north of Saipan. Mr. Tenorio said the area remains off-limits to human habitation and that travel to the island is still restricted, except for monitoring activities conducted by the authorities. According to the emergency declaration, the volcanic activity and seismic phenomena continue to exist, almost eight months since it showed signs of major eruption. Residents have since fled the northern island after the government prohibited travels to the area. The latest warning shall remain in effect for 30 days. DPS, together with EMO and the Office of the Mayor of the Northern Islands, is granted authority to enforce the off-limits ban.

Proposed one-stop permitting office opposed

The Coastal Resources Management Office has opposed a plan to establish a One-Stop Building Permit Center because it will not be feasible for a broad-based multi-jurisdictional regulatory authority setup currently existing in the CNMI. A proposed measure introduced by Rep. William S. Torres has sought the creation of a One-Stop Center to reduce the bureaucracy and cause unnecessary delays in acquiring building permits in various government agencies. Several efforts have been made which even led to the creation of task forces to look into the possibility of changing the current permitting system, which has been widely criticized for being too bureaucratic.

Mar. 15, 2001

CUC losing millions from Tinian Dynasty case

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation is losing revenue—enough to subsidize the operation of its Tinian power plant—from the delay on the hearing of Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino's permit violation case. CUC legal counsel Robert Torres said millions in revenues, not only for the utility corporation but the whole of CNMI government, have been wasted by the delay. He urged the Coastal Resources Management to immediately appoint a hearing officer to replace Jerry Cody who is currently assigned to hear the case. Mr. Cody was recently ordered by Labor and Immigration Secretary Mark Zachares to recuse himself from hearing the case due to conflict of interest.

SGMA confab highlights industry's improvements

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has noted improvements on the island's apparel manufacturing industry during a well-attended training session hosted by the Saipan Garment Manufacturers Association. Local and federal safety officials met with over 80 factory representatives in an effort to bring the industry up to the highest American standards for worker safety and health.

State Department offers assistance to US citizens in Japan

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. State Department is offering assistance to U.S. citizens in Japan, who may be affected by the 8.9-magnitude earthquake and tsunami that followed on Friday.

At this time there are no reports of injury to U.S. citizens. Communications, however, have been disrupted. The U.S. Department of State and the U.S. embassy and consulates in Japan are working to obtain information on the status of U.S. citizens and to provide emergency assistance to U.S. citizens.

If people from the Northern Mariana Islands have a concern about a specific U.S. citizen in Japan, contact your congressional office at kilili@mail.house.gov and the State Department at JapanEmergencyUSC@state.gov.

If you have concern about a U.S. citizen in the tsunami zone, also contact your congressional office and PacificTsunamiUSC@state.gov.

The U.S. Department of Defense reports that all U.S. military personnel are accounted for, and there are no reports of injuries. The Department of Defense instructs that family members of Department of Defense personnel should call 1-800-342-9647 to inquire about their loved ones or contact the individual unit command directly for more specific information.

Currently, the State Department reports that Narita and Haneda airports, serving Tokyo, are closed and possibly damaged. Trains and subways are down in the Tokyo metropolitan region, and train service may be sporadic throughout the rest of the country. Okinawa and Sapporo report no damage from the earthquake. South Hokkaido has reported flooding along the shore. Aftershocks can be expected and may be severe. The State Department advises that U.S. citizens in Japan should take basic earthquake safety precautions.

Persons concerned about the status of a citizen of a third country are advised to that country's embassy or consulate. Contact information for foreign embassies and consulates in the United States is available in the Country Specific Information links at www.travel.state.gov. ***(PR)***

USCIS *gives extension for visitors stranded by quake*

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service has announced it will grant an extra 30 days stay to Japanese and other foreign nationals stranded in the U.S. as a result of Friday's earthquakes and tsunamis in the Pacific.

USCIS is advising visitors traveling under the Visa Waiver Program, who are at a U.S. airport, to contact the Customs and Border Protection office there for assistance.

All other VWP travelers and visitors traveling under a nonimmigrant visa are asked to visit the local USCIS. On Saipan the USCIS Application Service Center is located at TSL Plaza Building on Beach Road in Garapan. For other parts of the U.S. go to http://egov.scis.gov to find the nearest USCIS office.

Nonimmigrant visa holders are asked to bring their passport, evidence that they are stranded, such as an itinerary for a cancelled flight, and their I-94 departure record.

For additional immigration relief options, visit USCIS' Special Situation page by going to http://www.uscis.gov. ***(PR)***

Man's sex abuse trial reset anew due to the lack of possible jurors

Due to an insufficient number of potential jurors, Superior Court presiding judge Robert C. Naraja has postponed again the jury trial of a man accused of sexually abusing two female minors.

In his order issued Thursday last week, Naraja vacated the jury trial of 40-year-old Marcelino S. Carlos Jr., scheduled for Monday, March 7, and set May 16, 2011, as the new trial date.

The new schedule is the third time the trial has been postponed in the last 12 months.

Assistant attorney general Benjamin Petersburg appeared for the government. Assistant public defender Michael Brown is counsel for Carlos.

The Office of the Attorney General filed in 2009 an information charging Carlos with three counts of sexual abuse of a minor in the first degree.

Police said Carlos sexually abused a girl when she was then 8 or 9 years old.

Carlos also allegedly sexually abused another teenager when she was just 8 years old. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

FHB launches Japan-Hawaii Relief Fund; donates first $100K to Fund

HONOLULU, Hawaii—First Hawaiian Bank announced yesterday the establishment of the Japan-Hawaii Relief Fund to assist the survivors of the devastating earthquake and tsunami of March 11. First Hawaiian Bank has donated $100,000 to the Fund.

All contributions to the Fund will be donated to the Japanese Red Cross Society, according to Don Horner, First Hawaiian Bank chairman and chief executive officer.

Those interested in making a contribution to the Japan-Hawaii Relief Fund may do so at any First Hawaiian Bank branch through March 31, 2011.

"Hawaii, Guam, and the CNMI has strong ties and friendships with the people of Japan. Our hearts and prayers go out to the survivors of this tragic disaster," Horner said. "One hundred percent of these donations will go directly to the Japanese Red Cross to support the victims and their families."

The Japanese Red Cross Society was founded in 1877 and has an extensive network of branches in cities, towns, and villages throughout Japan. They also operate hospitals and blood collection agencies through the country. Her Majesty the Empress serves as honorary president of the society.

First Hawaiian is Hawaii's oldest and largest bank with over $15 billion in total assets and 63 branches throughout Hawaii, Guam, and the CNMI. ***(FHB)***

76 money managers apply for Fund RFP

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The NMI Retirement Fund has received a total of 76 applications from companies that want to join its roster of money managers and the board of trustees recently created an ad hoc committee to review all responses and come up with a final list.

The Fund currently has nine money managers that handle its assets.

Fund board of trustees chair Sixto Igisomar said any plan to increase or decrease the number of Fund money managers would depend on the recommendation of the ad hoc committee.

The committee is composed of board members, with Fund administrator Richard Villagomez facilitating the group.

On Friday the board was in executive session for over five hours, reviewing all applications in consultation with its investment consultant, Wilshire Consulting, which participated via teleconference.

"We reviewed the [applications] and now we need to shorten them down. This is why we created [Friday] the ad hoc committee, which will further review them," Igisomar said Friday after the meeting.

He said the committee will look at the applicants' management type and owners, experiences, and the type of investors they have, among other things.

The board, however, did not set a deadline on when it expects to finish the job, mainly due to the expected tedious process involved.

The board earlier targeted April 2011 to begin re-allocating its assets, estimated at over $320 million as of January this year. The Fund's investment portfolio is made up of common stocks, 65 percent; fixed income, 27 percent; hedge funds, 6 percent; and money market, 2 percent.

Saipan Tribune has learned that the Fund has liquidated some of its investments due to the "unsatisfying performance" of some of its money managers. It is now in the process of replacing some of these managers.

To carefully manage its assets, the Fund has commissioned an assets liability study to show the Fund's projected actuarial liability versus actual portfolio and a projection of the Fund's assets through 2028.

Igisomar said the study has been completed and will be used when deciding on the hiring of new money managers.

"The fact that we review our asset allocations is in line with the decision on what money managers we need to keep, retain, or remove," said Igisomar.

By law, the Fund is required to be fully funded by 2045. To meet that target, it needs about $860 million in investment funds. The current $311 million in investments reflects only about 40 percent of the needed amount.

HIGH ACHIEVER

Winona-Rebekah Blanco Maratita, 2010 graduate of Tinian Jr./Sr. High School, was inducted on March 10, 2011, into the Alpha Lambda Delta (National Honor Society for Freshmen) at Oregon State University. She received a certificate, pin, and lifetime membership. Alpha Lambda Delta is a national honor society for students who have maintained a 3.5 or higher GPA and are in the top 20 percent of their class during their first year or term of higher education. The Oregon State University Chapter was established in 1933. Maratita is in the pre-Pharmacy program at OSU and aspires to be a pharmacist serving her CNMI and Tinian communities. She is the daughter of the late David Q. Maratita and Lucia Blanco-Maratita.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: RFP11-DEQ-044

SUBMISSION: APRIL 06, 2011 TIME: 2:00 P.M.

"MARIANA ISLANDS BLEACHING RESPONSE FOR THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY"

THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR THIS PROJECT MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY, GUALO RAI CENTER, SUITE 101 FROM MONDAY TO FRIDAY, 7:30 A.M.-4:30 P.M., EXCEPT ON CNMI LEGAL HOLIDAYS.

ALL INQUIRIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO MR. FRANK M. RABAULIMAN, DIRECTOR OF DEQ AT (670) 664-8500 NO LATER THAN CLOSE OF BUSINESS, **MARCH 28, 2011.**

THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, LOCAL PREFERENCE *IS NOT AVAILABLE*, BECAUSE ITS USE IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW GRANTING FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT.

/s/ FRANK M. RABAULIMAN
DIRECTOR, DEQ

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
P.O. BOX 501370
SAIPAN, MP 96950

Head Start Policy Council
AGENDA

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Head Start Policy Council hereby gives notice that it will have a meeting on March 18, 2011 (Friday) from 1:00pm-3:00pm, Rota NMC, Tatachog, Rota.

I. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Quorum
4. Adoption of Agenda
5. Adoption of Minutes:
   a. February 23, 2011

II. Public Comments
III. Communications
1. From the State Board of Education
2. From the Office of Head Start

IV. Monthly Reports
1. Director
2. Managers
3. Finance
4. Council Standing Committees
   a. Personnel
   b. Education
   c. Executive
   d. Finance
   e. Public Relations

V. Old Business
1. Appointments of Committee Chairpersons for Policy 8000 Revisions
2. Updates
   a. Community Assessment
3. Action Item
   a. Approval of 2010-2011 Self Assessment Report

VI. New Business
VII. Executive Session
VIII. Next Meeting
IX. Adjournment

Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)7, the Council may vote to meet in Executive Session. Public Comments are limited to 15 minutes; therefore comments are limited to 3 minutes each.

This meeting is open to the public, interested individuals are welcome to attend. Any person(s) requiring special accommodations may contact Ms. Candace Q. Celis at 664-3761; several days notice is required.

/s/ Mr. Anthony Barcinas
Chairperson

MARIANAS PUBLIC LAND TRUST

SPECIAL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, The Open Government Act of 1992, the Marianas Public Land Trust has scheduled a MPLT Trustees Regular Meeting to be held on Friday, March 18, 2011 beginning at 9:00am at MPLT Conference Room, 1313 Anatahan Drive, Capital Hill, Saipan, MP 96950.

The following agenda is hereby established:

I PRELIMINARIES
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes

II ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT
III CONSULTANT'S REPORTS
1. Investment Consultant Report
2. Loan Administrator Report
3. Legal Counsel Report
4. Board Consultant Report
   - Financial Statement

IV OLD BUSINESS
1. FY '10 Audit Report- Draft
2. Investment Policy Statement - Draft
3. Resolution MPLT 11-1 - Draft

V COMMUNICATIONS
- Proponent's letter on High Yield Loan Program
- CUC

VI NEW BUSINESS
VII MISCELLANEOUS
- By Laws – Travel

VIII ADJOURNMENT

At anytime during this scheduled meeting, the Board of Trustees may be required to enter into Executive Session to discuss matters deemed privileged and confidential.

In accordance with Public Law 8-41, additional agenda items may be added to the above listing only by the recorded vote of the majority of the trustee governing body. All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written and oral testimony on the above agenda items.

/s/ Alvaro A. Santos
Chairman, MPLT Trustees

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXI, Issue No. 62

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Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Panic at the pump

Based on the public reaction to rising gasoline prices, it feels like 2008 all over again: Blame the government. Blame the speculators. Blame the North Koreans, er, Libyans. Drill, baby, drill.

Calm down, everybody. This isn't a problem that needs to be "fixed," at least not unless it lasts a lot longer than that previous big run-up: All those bad memories of oil soaring to $147 a barrel three years ago tend to crowd out the vague recollection that, oh yeah, prices came tumbling down just as fast.

We didn't tap the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. We didn't over-regulate the commodity markets. We didn't declare war on any other country. We didn't open every nook and cranny for drilling. We didn't need to. The market, as it has before, corrected itself.

We should give the market a chance to do the same this time.

Oil prices have shot up mostly because of fear. The issue isn't so much a matter of supply and demand, but rather the worry that geopolitical risks in the Middle East threaten the oil production of Saudi Arabia and other nations that pump far more crude than war-torn Libya.

Under pressure to "do something," the Obama administration has discussed using our strategic reserve. Bad idea: We never should use that reserve to tamp down prices for political effect or to silence our own squawking. The reserve is for emergencies that hurt supply, as in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina—the last time we tapped it.

Speculators always make an easy target, but this time they had even less to do with rising prices in 2007 and 2008. Oil skyrocketed then partly because commodity traders bid it up: Margin debt soared, as they borrowed money to raise their bets. Last year, however, crude moved up from its 2009 lows without a big increase in margin debt, suggesting that end-users—for example, airlines that lock in future prices for fuel—were behind the gain rather than oft-demonized hedge funds.

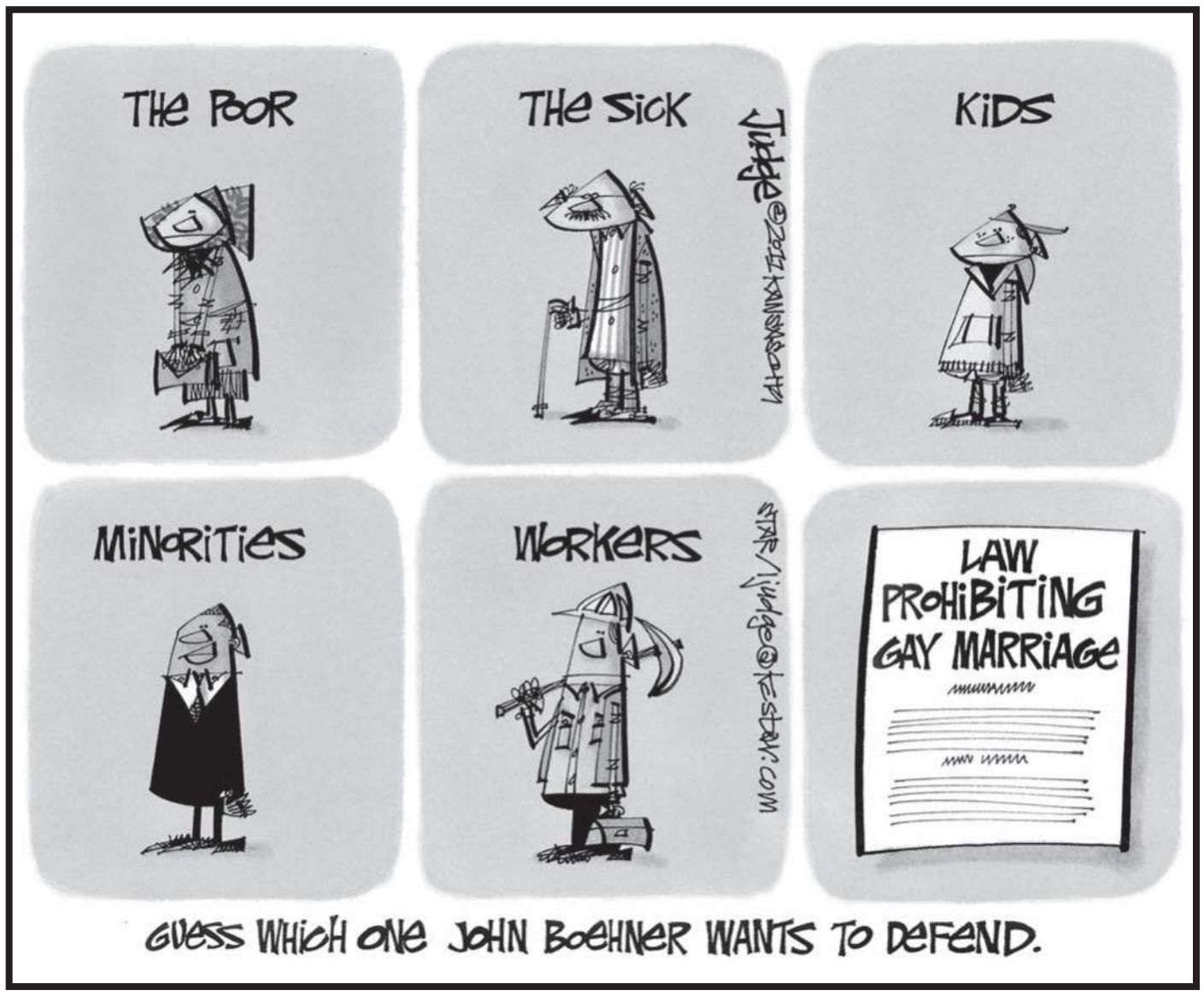
The administration's policy on domestic drilling invites criticism, too, much of it valid. Looks to us like the president is making it up as he goes along. But even the most ardent believer in tapping America's resources should recognize that additional production since Obama took office couldn't have come fast enough to make much of a difference in gas prices today.

We need to resist the impulse to overreact, and that goes for the Federal Reserve too. It's disturbing to hear Atlanta Fed President Dennis Lockhart already talking about a new round of monetary stimulus to offset the strain at the pump. The Fed's policy of easy money, which cheapens the dollar, already is driving up the price of oil and other commodities. Now we're going to print more? Give the dollar a break.

Not that higher pump prices are a reason to applaud. For a nation barely recovering from a brutal recession, $4-a-gallon gas causes genuine pain, and $5 would be agonizing.

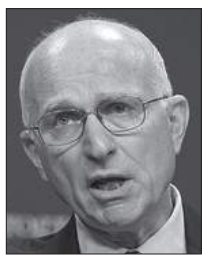
What can we drivers do? In a word, conserve. Eliminating unnecessary trips and keeping vehicles in good operating condition can make a positive difference—no matter what the price of gas.

(c) 2011, Chicago Tribune



The Pentagon's Achilles' heel

By LAWRENCE KORB
Los Angeles Times



Lawrence Korb, a former assistant secretary of Defense in the Reagan administration, is a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress. Laura Conley and Alex Rothman, research assistants at the center, contributed to this article. They wrote this for the Los Angeles Times.

The Pentagon currently spends more than $50 billion—about 10 percent of its base budget—on health care, an almost 300 percent increase over the last decade. These costs are projected to jump to $65 billion by fiscal year 2015. To put this in perspective, the department will spend more on health care this fiscal year than on the war in Iraq and will probably spend more on health care in 2015 than on the conflict in Afghanistan.

It is not surprising that Pentagon leaders have complained that health care costs are "eating the Defense Department alive." Leaders from both parties agree. But Congress has been loath to take action for fear of appearing to break faith with the nation's troops.

What do the Pentagon's health care billions buy? A plan called Tricare that covers both serving troops, their dependents and the 5 million Americans who qualify as military retirees—those who have spent at least 20 years in the services—and their dependents. (The Pentagon doesn't foot the bill for the Department of Veterans Affairs, which provides health care to those wounded in the service of their country. The VA is separately funded.)

Under Tricare, active-duty troops receive free care, and their families receive coverage at little or no cost. That's justified, in part because most of those troops will serve only one or two tours of duty, so the benefits are short term. But retiree plans are a different story. Many retirees are as young as 38 when they leave the service; the Defense Department estimates that retiree coverage has accounted for about 60 percent of its increased health care costs since 2000.

The problem is that the government has not maintained a balance between fees and benefits. Despite skyrocketing health-care costs, working-age retirees (those under age 65) pay just $230 a year for an individual and $460 a year for a family under Tricare's popular Prime plan. For those over 65, the Tricare supplemental plan for Medicare is free and, unsurprisingly, overused. On top of this, retirees can also receive free health care at military facilities on a space-available basis.

As it turns out, most working-age military retirees decline to enroll in the health-care plans offered by their employers and instead take advantage of the rock-bottom Tricare premiums. This includes people making six-figure civilian salaries in the private sector while drawing military pensions in excess of $50,000 a year.

Why isn't something done to change all this? Because military retirees have a strong lobby that has convinced Congress, which must vote to alter the program, that it cannot afford to withdraw "support" from the troops, not least because it will make it difficult to recruit qualified people.

The Pentagon's own studies have laid out the answers to holding down the growth in health-care costs for military retirees, as has President Obama's deficit commission. They propose restoring the cost-sharing balance between taxpayers and retired, working-age beneficiaries that Congress established in 1995 when it created Tricare. Had these rates been adjusted as intended, the enrollment fees would now exceed $1,000 a year for individuals and $2,000 a year for families. A civilian plan with comparable benefits would cost a family upward of $5,000 a year.

Eliminating the military health-care plan for working-age retirees above a set income level with access to a civilian plan would also help control costs.

Finally, creating incentives to reduce the overuse of care by retirees over 65 would also help address cost growth. Charging a modest annual fee and not covering the first $500 of out-of-pocket expenses would significantly reduce the overuse of the Medicare supplemental coverage.

Taking these steps can keep healthcare costs at the current level of $50 billion a year, adjusted for inflation, without unfairly affecting military personnel and their families.

Those currently serving, and wounded or low-income veterans, would continue to be covered. Low-income or unemployed working-age retirees should also remain eligible for the inexpensive plans.

Nor do these proposals break faith with retirees. Congress established the principle of cost-sharing when it created Tricare, and the courts have ruled that military retirees are not entitled to free healthcare at civilian facilities.

And these reforms will not affect the quality of the people joining the services, because most don't join with the idea of serving the 20 years necessary to qualify for retirement benefits.

The gusher of military spending, which saw the Pentagon budget double in the last decade, is being turned off. Taking steps to control health-care costs now will allow the Pentagon to spend more of its budget in the future where it must: on military readiness.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Zen calmness

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune*'s Opinion Section.*

Channel NewsAsia out of Singapore, along with CCTV 9 of Beijing, is following the unfolding crisis in Japan after the 8.9 Richter scale tremor, the strongest quake ever to shake the nation, and the subsequent tsunami that sent 10-meter-high waves 10 kilometers inland in Honshu, leaving the tarmac of the Sendai International Airport underwater, a local hospital still standing as the only refuge for some 300 persons in an area of collapsed structures, and 10,000 people from one village still remaining unaccounted for. The predictable aftershocks add damage and discomfort, but it is the threat of the nuclear meltdown of five reactors that is sending chills down everyone's spine.

Not unlike humankind's previous relationship to "flat earth," which we now know to be spherical, and calling the experience of sundown as "sunset" when the earth actually turns, we never really consider land mass as floating tectonic plates on magma, but to appreciate how strong the earthquake in Japan was, the whole archipelago moved by a couple of meters and the axis of the planet itself shifted by a few centimeters!

Zen Japan is showing a remarkable face of solid calmness. News reports portray a nation intentionally going through the motions of a rehearsed drill in the midst of the surprising destruction that trails the wake of this disaster. The vaunted train system, one of the most sophisticated rails in the world that connects Kagoshima in south Kyushu to Wakkanai of north Hokkaido, shut down momentarily, along with its metro systems, at least in the urban centers of Honshu. Undaunted, people bought bicycles and pedaled home, while some just trudged and walked in the cold.

We had a major life turn to make in 2002, and we took a week retreat late January before the cherry blossoms, took the train from Narita to Sapporo in Hokkaido on the eastern corridor through Sendai, and returning on the western route through Akita and Niigata to West Tokyo. The cultivated and manicured countryside was a scene to behold, the tidiness of the trains and orderliness of its people a welcome respite from the hustle of crowd and mass humanity.

Although signs of juvenile vandalism—mainly graffiti—were evident in metro structures, and the surprising sight of homeless tents were on blighted display outside the Shinjuku municipal center, the orderly Japan of our previous acquaintance, of nature both physical and societal disciplined into the level of art on terrain and population, was still very much and unmistakably alive! Majestic Mt. Fuji reigned as Hokusai's rowers navigate the towering waves off Kanagawa in my sea of tranquility!

It is with deep appreciation that I recall that solitary week almost a decade ago, but as I watch today the deluge of painful unraveling that characterizes the Land of the Rising Sun, only the sound of silence is appropriate to express our profound sorrow of the innocent suffering unleashed.

A people's tragedy, however, has awakened humanity's empathy. Though its economy is one where its GNP far exceeds its GDP, showing barely any economic growth though ascending into international eminence, it has shown an economic arrangement where the concern for humanness matters. Wrangling in the Diet notwithstanding, Japan projected a country with a human face.

Its virtues of simple elegance in cuisine and decor, lifestyle and landscape, custom and technology, its thrust toward moderation on all things in its post-WWII demeanor, has endeared it in many parts of the world; though it was saddled with the cruel memories of Nanjing, the stigma of Pearl Harbor, it also lived the mushroom cloud brunt of Little Boy and Fat Man over the skies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In both cities, the suicide cliffs of Saipan and Tinian are not unknown.

Japan's Emperor heeded the winds of change violently exploded on the southern skies and terminated hostilities; the nation took this nuclear kamikaze and domesticated it for peaceful use. Now, the ice and the fire, the heat and the water, Mother Nature's yin-yang elemental force comes calling on Nippon's door again.

Presbyter and poet Ellie Stock wrote the following not too long ago:

What do I call what calls from the deeps,
that pulses through stars and quickens heart's beat,
that surges through waves and cleanses with fire,
emerges from dust and breathes soul's desire?
What do I name what mocks human pride,
that bends the tree of life, sustaining being's tide?

It is with Zen calmness that we join Japan and the rest of the world in daring to give a name to that which emerges from the deeps, whether from the bowels of the earth, or from the deep abyss of the battered human soul.

The world joins that call of the deep as its K9s head for Tokyo to locate survivors. There is solidarity afoot in a world already grieved by the Gaddafis and the Tehrar Squares. But the ebb and flow of global reconciliation fills the air, and I, in my archaic season of Lent, smell the scent of transformation, in faith, hope and love. With T.S. Elliot and Zen calmness, I sing:

Quick now, here, now, always—
A condition of complete simplicity
(Costing not less than everything)
And all shall be well and
All manner of thing shall be well...

Letters to the Editor

Warehouse proposal for our village

This is to alert the people of Susupe that a wholesale distribution company is applying to rezone lot no. 380-Bnew-7-1-R1 in Susupe from village residential to commercial so it could build a huge warehouse on the lot. I and all who signed a petition against this project proposal ask Zoning board chair Diego Blanco and the Zoning board of directors to deny this application. The company should retain the present location of its warehouse/ distribution company in the Lower Base area. This is not the type of commercial business or investment that is needed on our island to help our company. The present location of the warehouse is in the port and industrial area and that is where it should stay and continue its business operation. To the company owner, since your existing business is already located in the port and industrial area, keep it there and don't move. Please visit the office of Coastal Resources Management so that they can direct you and your engineering team and advisors to the rightful location instead of locating this proposed unsightly commercial project in our quiet and peaceful village of Susupe. Leave the village residential alone and do not pollute it with added nuisance, traffic congestion, road damage, social impact, and so forth. Have the landowner use his property to develop sound projects that will be consistent with residential use to the highest extent practicable. Your design engineers, landowners, and advisers should advise you that this is a sensitive residential community and it should be kept that way. Better yet, you should construct a beautiful three-bedroom house and landscape it with a beautiful garden and it will blend in with the adjoining properties and will be consistent with the highest use priorities in residential sites.

CRM regulation section 15-1-310(g) 1 quotes: "Projects shall be undertaken and completed so as to maintain and, where appropriate, enhance and protect the Commonwealth's inherent natural beauty and natural resources and so as to ensure the protection of the people's constitutional right to a clean and healthful environment." The Saipan Zoning office and its board should coordinate with other government regularly agencies to review projects for consistency in this small island environment.

This project is not consistent with residential development. We therefore ask the Zoning board again to deny this project for rezoning. Changes in this residential area can generate adverse effects on the values of the adjoining properties. This proposed warehouse will completely change the overall character of this village and it is irreversible.

So for consistency and value protection, let us control the scale and intensity of commercial development and maintain the integrity and amenities of residential communities. We ask all our people and our Legislature to support us against this project proposal and air your opposition to the Zoning board of directors. Let us deny this application and welcome other types of investors that will help our current economic problem.

To the company owner, take your wholesale company and find an abandoned garment factory and use it for your relocation if that is your objective. We have more than 200 signatures petitioning against your project proposal and we will continue to get more. Take your investment elsewhere.

Marcelino Aguon
Chalan Kanoa, Saipan

Way to go!

Congratulations to the Southern High School's Manta Ray Band! Not only have you shown courage here in New York, you went on and continued to excel! We are proud of you! Way to go! Hip, hip, hurray!

Jack Taitano
New York, NY

An economic door to the future

The comment of the CPA executive director that the planned development of the Rota east harbor is impractical is of course very wrong. Why?

First, when the west harbor was developed back in the '80s, it was done by default because funds were limited and because there was an existing harbor built by a Japanese for the convenience of a sugar cane company—not necessarily the best location.

Second, the size of the area will not enable large cruise ships, tankers, or large military vessels to call port on Rota for R&R. Future economic opportunity will continue to be very limited.

Third, putting up a breakwater at the entrance of the west harbor will be prohibitive because there is a deep drop adjacent to the entrance.

Fourth, the west harbor is more susceptible to trade winds and rough weather.

Fifth, the cost of developing the east harbor appears to be less costly as no or minimal dredging activity is needed due to its natural depth.

Sixth, the area is clearly a well-protected bay where large vessels of all sizes can anchor or call port.

A guy with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had agreed that the development of the east harbor should be explored. Mr. Sullivan, I believe, was also involved with the master plan that quoted a price of $30 to $65 million to further develop the west harbor. All we are asking for this east harbor development is $25 million that will open our economic door for future generations and not be limited to the existing situation. We need to look forward and not be content with the present.

Frank M. Atalig
Sinapalo 1, Rota

Do unto others

The one-week visit a few years ago of Japanese Emperor Akihito and his wife, Empress Michiko, to Saipan clearly demonstrated their love of our place and our people and we reciprocate the same feelings toward them and the Japanese people. This strong feeling remains evident on our island and our people. It is, therefore, extremely painful, heartbreaking, and even numbing in my sense of sorrow as I watch my neighbor suffering at the hand of Mother Nature. It is so devastating to see so many lives erased, with this unprecedented earthquake and the destruction of the tsunami, followed by a more unforgiving disaster from the nuclear plant, with the possibility of radioactive fallout and evacuation. It is reassuring to know that our military can quickly relocate the Japanese who are in need to the United States of America.

The CNMI can be a clearing point as it was during the Vietnam War. This time, Japanese citizens could live with local families or in any other available houses. As a Northern Marianas descent and a U.S. citizen myself, and without any second thoughts, I am extending my assistance for the Japanese people to relocate to the Northern Marianas Islands under Article XII. Live with us on our valuable land, without the 55-year clause as an option. Remain in the CNMI until Japan is secure and has recovered. At the same time, our health facilities on Rota, Tinian, and Saipan should be utilized for those individuals with medical conditions. The medical professionals from Japan should come together with medical supplies available to care for the patients.

With open arms, I ask from the bottom of my heart for all the people of the CNMI to open their hearts and let the Japanese people live with us in this most noble manner. Our government lands are protected by Article XII. We are only people who can own land in our Commonwealth but we can extend our Article XII lands to relocate those Japanese citizens who wish to come to the Northern Marianas Islands and live with us until they can safely return to their country. I am asking all our leaders to invite the Japanese people who have been affected to relocate to the Marianas as soon as possible. Homeland Security should have already cleared the people for travel to our islands. We are all anxiously praying for them to make the CNMI their second home. With God's blessing to all the suffering souls and the living.

Jack Atalig
Chinatown, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

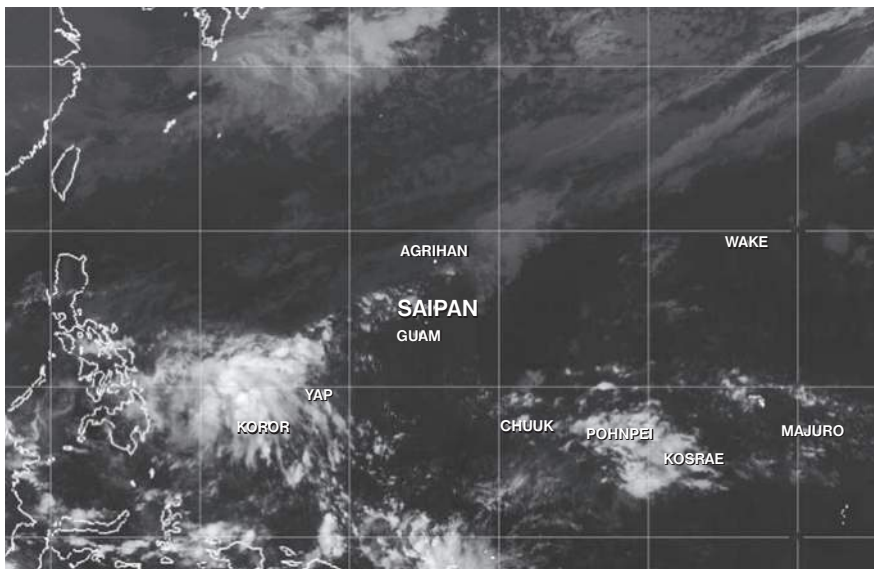
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲85	▼78
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼78
Yap	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲82	▼77
Pohnpei	Showers	▲83	▼78
Kosrae	Showers	▲87	▼78
Majuro	Showers	▲87	▼76

Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲72	▼63
Beijing	Sunny	▲56	▼31
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲62	▼53
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲80	▼72
London	Partly Cloudy	▲55	▼45
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲73	▼53
Manila	Thundershowers	▲83	▼75
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲67	▼56
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲80	▼65
New York	Sunny	▲52	▼40
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲45	▼35
Paris	Partly Cloudy	▲64	▼45
Pusan	Windy	▲48	▼33
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲67	▼49
Salem	Rain	▲54	▼45
San Francisco	Showers	▲63	▼57
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲41	▼28
Tokyo	Showers	▲51	▼37
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	▲52	▼47

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2011
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shear line extends southwestward from 25N170E across the Northern Marianas near Pagan at 18N146E to beyond 130E at 13N east of 148E clouds and patchy rain are found along and up to 300 miles northwest of this boundary west of 148 cloudiness and scattered showers are present along and up to 150 miles northwest of the shear line. Convergent low-level winds are generating scattered showers and thunderstorms south of Koror near the equator or south of a line from 2N131E to 3N136E to 2N142E. A surface trough extends northeastward from 4N151E to 11N155E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found near Chuuk between 4N and 11N from 145E to 157E. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms north of Pohnpei and Kosrae and also across the Marshall Islands within 130 miles of a line from 11N157E to 4N173E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

4:55 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
9:53 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.3 Feet
2:49 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
10:25 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:25 AM	6:27 PM
Wednesday	6:25 AM	6:27 PM
Thursday	6:24 AM	6:27 PM
Friday	6:23 AM	6:28 PM
Saturday	6:23 AM	6:28 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	1:55 PM	2:14 AM
Wednesday	2:55 PM	3:05 AM
Thursday	3:55 PM	3:54 AM
Friday	4:56 PM	4:42 AM
Saturday	5:57 PM	5:29 AM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 16, 2010

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM

CO9317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
CO9313	7:55am	8:45am	3, 6
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
CO9601	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
CO9603	3:05pm	3:55pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
CO9605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	6:10am	8:45am	Daily
DL285	6:40am	9:15am	1, 3, ,4, 5, 6
DL297	4:35pm	7:15pm	Daily

SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)

OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via KIX

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

CA988	3:15am	6:55am	1, 5 Dec 13, 17, 20, 24 & 27 only

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ606/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
CO9317/891	4:25am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM
DL285/173	6:40am	10:15pm	1, 3, 4, 5, 6 via NRT
CO9313/933	7:55am	9:25pm	3 via GUM
CO9313/893	7:55am	11:00pm	3 via GUM-Palau
CO9603/933	3:05pm	9:25pm	5 via GUM
CO9603/893	3:05pm	11:00pm	5 via GUM-Palau
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7 ICN
OZ604/715	3:20pm	11:30pm	7
CO9605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	1, 2, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
CO9599/PR111	9:30pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
CO9603/909	3:05pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:35pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ604/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM-SAIPAN

CO9316	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
CO9596	6:35am	7:25am	3, 6
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
CO9600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
CO9602	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:25am	3:05pm	Daily
DL286	7:45pm	12:20am+1	2, 3, ,4 ,5, 7
DL288	8:00pm	12:30am+1	Daily

OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN

OZ120	9:50am	2:20am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:10pm	2:20am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX
OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

CA987	6:40pm	1:55am+1	4, 7 Dec 12, 16, 19, 23 & 26 only

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ716/603	12:30am	2:20pm	4, 6 via ICN
DL172/286	8:05am	12:20am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
CO890/9606	10:55am	8:50pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	1:10pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/CO9596	10:15pm	7:25am+1	6 via GUM
PR110/CO9596	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 2, 4, 7 via GUM
CO892/9596	10:25pm	7:25am+1	3 via GUM-Palau
CO892/9596	10:25pm	7:50am+1	5 via GUM-Palau
CO934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 2, 7 via GUM
CO934/9596	11:25pm	7:50am+1	4 via GUM
CO934/9596	11:59pm	7:25am+1	3 via GUM
CO934/9596	11:59pm	7:50am+1	5 via GUM

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	2 ,4 ,6, 7 via ICN
OZ750/603	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C0910/9596	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; CA: Air China
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

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  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
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  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40	11:50	Daily
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

Business

Japan central bank injects funds as stocks plunge

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's central bank injected a record 7 trillion yen ($85.5 billion) into money markets and the Tokyo stock market nosedived Monday on the first business day since an earthquake and tsunami devastated the country's northeast and raised dire worries about the economy.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 stock average fell 487 points, or 4.8 percent, to 9,767.18. Worries about the economic impact of the disaster triggered a broad sell-off that hit all sectors.

The Bank of Japan moved quickly to try to keep financial markets stable. By flooding the banking system with cash, it hopes banks will continue lending money and meet the likely surge in demand for post-earthquake funds.

Immediately after the earthquake, the central bank pledged to "do its utmost," including providing liquidity. A one-day policy meeting was scheduled for later Monday.

Preliminary estimates put repair costs from the earthquake and tsunami in the tens of billions of dollars— a huge blow for an economy that lost its place as the world's No. 2 to China last year, and was already in a fragile state.

Japan

Japan is an archipelago of 6,852 islands, the four largest islands account for 97 percent of the country's land area.

Size 145,914 sq. miles (377,915 sq. km)

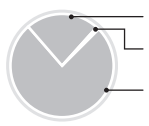
Population 126,475,664 (2011)

Seismic activity About 1,500 tremors every year; many dormant, some active volcanos

Economy

• The third largest economy in the world

GDP by sector



23% Industry
1.1% Agriculture
75.9% Services

GDP per person	$34,200
GDP	$5.391 trillion (2010)
Public debt	225.8% of GDP
Labor force	65.7 million
Unemployment	5.1 percent

Source: CIA Factbook
Graphic: Melina Yingling
© 2011 MCT

Political background

• United as nation in 1590
• Atomic bombs hit Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945
• U.N. membership in 1956
• **Emperor** Akihito
• **Prime Minister** Naoto Kan, elected June, 2010
• **Economic Minister** Yoshihiko Noda

Main exports

Motor vehicles, electronic equipment, machine tools, steel and nonferrous metals, chemicals, textiles, processed foods

Japan's economy has been ailing for 20 years, barely managing to eke out weak growth between slowdowns, saddled by a massive public debt that, at 200 percent of gross domestic product, is the biggest among industrialized nations.

"In the short term, the market will almost surely suffer and stocks will plunge. People might see an already weakened Japan, overshadowed by a growing China, getting dealt the finishing blow from this quake," said Koetsu Aizawa, economics professor at Saitama University.

The nation's big-three automakers, meanwhile, said they would halt all production in Japan due to widespread damage to both suppliers and transport networks in the region.

The Bank of Japan pledged to pump more money into financial markets when it holds a policy board meeting Monday. There is not much left for the central bank to do regarding interest rates, which are already close to zero.

Tens of billions of dollars are expected to be needed to rebuild homes, roads and other infrastructure— requiring public spending that will add to the national debt.

"The impact on Japan's economy will be devastating," said Sheila Smith, senior fellow for Japan Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, a New York-based think tank. "The long-term economic blow to a country already struggling to lower its budget deficit ... will be significant."

Noting the 1995 earthquake in Kobe cost $132 billion and was the world's most expensive natural disaster, she said it was too early to say whether the losses from Friday's disaster would be on that massive a scale.

Four nuclear plants were damaged in the temblors, causing widespread power outages. In a frantic effort to prevent meltdowns, nuclear plant operators ruined at least two reactors by pumping sea water into them.

In an unprecedented move for tech-savvy Japan in recent decades, Tokyo Electric Power Co. rolled out blackouts of three hours per day to parts of suburban Tokyo and other cities, starting Monday.

And Tokyo trains, which usually run like clockwork but stopped for nearly the entire day after the quake, will be on a reduced schedule starting Monday, to conserve electricity.

"It looks like we are going to be running on reduced electricity for a long time. That is a definite risk to industrial production," said Carl Weinberg, chief economist at New York-based researcher High Frequency Economics.

"For Japan, a nation that lives by the sea, food comes in by the sea, energy comes in by the sea, exports go out by the sea. Everything stops if a quarter of the coastline has been wiped out," said Weinberg who teaches at New York University.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

China approves economic plan, no political changes

BEIJING (AP)—China approved economic plans for the next five years that aim to empower consumers but rejected any hints of political reforms as it closed its annual legislative session Monday. The Five-Year Plan calls for a shift from rapid economic growth to higher quality, more sustainable development with a greater emphasis on services and broader distribution of wealth. If carried out, the plan could drive a far-reaching transformation of the world's second-largest economy from low-cost factory into a major consumer market. More consumer demand could help to boost imports, narrowing China's trade surplus with the United States and other major economies.

China says 3,001 arrested for product piracy

BEIJING (AP)—Chinese authorities have arrested 3,001 people in their latest crackdown on rampant product piracy and seized fake or counterfeit medicines, liquor, mobile phones and other goods, officials said Sunday. The campaign launched in October comes as Beijing faces pressure from the United States and other trading partners to stamp out product copying. China is a leading soure of fake goods despite repeated crackdowns, but Chinese officials have promised the latest enforcement will produce lasting results. Communist leaders have given the new crackdown special prominence, publicly linking it to efforts to transform China from a low-cost factory to a creator of profitable technology by nurturing companies in software and other fields. China's fledgling software, music and other creative companies have been devastated by unlicensed copying.

Users complain iPhone clock bungles time change

NEW YORK (AP)—It's hard enough to get your bearings when the time changes twice a year. It's all but impossible when your phone starts playing tricks on you, too. Users of Apple's iPhone peppered Twitter and blogs with complaints Sunday when their phones bungled the one-hour "spring forward" to daylight savings time that went into effect overnight Saturday. One user complained of missing church, another of almost missing yoga. One called her iPhone stupid and several just asked for help. It turns out some users' phones fell back one hour instead of springing forward, making the time displayed on the iPhone two hours off.

AFTER EARTHQUAKE IN JAPAN

Delta offers customers ability to change travel plans

ATLANTA—Delta Air Lines is waiving change fees for customers whose flight plans may be affected by the recent earthquake and tsunami in Japan.

Customers booked on Delta-ticketed flights to, from or through airports in Japan today through March 15 may make a one-time change for travel with the same origin and destination as long as new flights are ticketed and rescheduled with travel beginning by March 31, 2011.

Due to earlier runway and facility closures at Tokyo's Narita and Haneda airports, 29 Delta flights were cancelled Friday, March 11 into and out of Tokyo. Delta operates nearly 60 daily flights to and from Narita and Haneda airports.

Delta is working to safely reaccommodate customers to their final destinations as quickly as possible.

All customers traveling in impacted markets should check their flight status at delta.com before arriving at the airport. Delta encourages customers to make changes and manage their travel at delta.com. Changes to origin or destination may result in a fare increase and any resulting fare difference would be collected at the time of rebooking. Customers whose flights are cancelled may request refunds.

Delta is in contact with its major employee and operational bases in Japan and is working to confirm that all employees and customers are safe. There are no reports of injuries to customers or employees at any Delta facility in Japan.

Delta will continue to monitor the impact from the earthquake and provide the latest updates at delta.com and twitter.com/DeltaNewsroom. ***(Delta Air Lines)***

Ambitious India now world's largest arms importer

NEW DELHI (AP)—In its race to join the club of international powers, India has reached another milestone—it's now the world's largest weapons importer.

A Swedish think tank that monitors global arms sales said Monday that India's weapons imports had overtaken China's, as the South Asian nation pushes ahead with plans to modernize its military, counter Beijing's influence and gain international clout.

"India has ambitions to become first a continental and (then) a regional power," said Rahul Bedi, a South Asia analyst with London-based Jane's Defense Weekly. "To become a big boy, you need to project your power."

According to the report from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, India accounted for 9 percent of all international arms imports in the period from 2006 to 2010, and it is expected to keep the top spot for the foreseeable future.

"Just from what they have already ordered, we know that in the coming few years India will be the top importer," said Siemon Wezeman, a senior fellow at the institute.

Indian Defense Ministry spokesman Sitanshu Kar declined to comment on the report before he had a chance to read it.

China dropped to second place, with 6 percent of global imports, as it continued to build up its domestic arms industry, something India has so far failed to do, Wezeman said.

The United States was the largest arms exporter, followed by Russia and Germany, according to the report.

The institute measures arms transactions over a five-year period to take into account the long time lag between orders and delivery of arms.

India's investment comes amid its rising concerns about China's regional power and its designs over vital Indian Ocean shipping lanes, which New Delhi sees as part of its sphere of influence.

AP

In this Jan. 21, 2011 file photo, Indian Naval officers walk past the Italian-built Fleet Tanker "INS Deepak", during an inauguration function to join the Indian Navy fleet in Mumbai, India.

Nation

Man swept to sea in Calif. sought new beginning

KLAMATH, Calif. (AP)—Leaving his teenage drug abuse behind in Oregon, Dustin Weber was seeking a new beginning along California's rugged far northern coast, happy to be in the land of his mother's heritage, the Yurok Tribe.

Yet before Weber could get a proper start, the 25-year-old was swept out to sea at the mouth of the Klamath River by a tsunami surge generated thousands of miles away by the earthquake off Japan's coast. Rescuers were unable to reach him Friday and called off their efforts; he is presumed dead, though his body has not been found.

His would be the first death of a person on the West Coast by a tsunami since 1964, when 11 people in nearby Crescent City died from the surge created by an earthquake in Alaska.

"His life was always challenged with drug issues and being Indian," said his mother, Lori Davis, of Bend, Ore., after searching miles of beach with family members and friends for her son's body.

"One of the things we fight most is drugs and alcohol. He's been clean and sober for a long time. I just feel like, you know, finally he was so happy. He has never been this happy in a long time," she said. "There have been so many times he was so close to death from other issues in his life. You know, it just doesn't make sense to me."

Dustin was born in Bend, and his parents separated when he was 5. He lived with his father, who works for a grocery chain. His mother remarried, then divorced again.

Blaise Butcher and Shawn Wilcox were friends with Dustin since they were little kids, building forts, fishing, snowboarding, and riding dirt bikes. "He liked music, sports cars, motorcycles, car shows," said Butcher. "He liked everything from hip hop and rap to a little bit of classical music."

Bend was hit hard by the Great Recession. Home to a ski resort, dozens of golf courses, fly fishing in the Deschutes River and spectacular views of the snowcapped Cascade Range, it grew from a little timber town to a four-season resort area when people had money to buy second homes. The wood products mill that once sustained it with blue-collar jobs became a shopping center catering to people with money to burn. When the mortgage money dried up, so did the Bend economy.

But Dustin was a hard worker, and when other people lost their jobs, he kept his on a landscaping crew, said Wilcox.

Over the years, there were car wrecks that should have taken Dustin's life. But he survived them all.

"I think there were three where he just completely cheated death," said Butcher.

After a bad crash in 2008, Dustin started cleaning up his life, attending meetings and staying sober, said Butcher.

Last Christmas, Davis told her son that his grandmother wanted to give him her old house in Klamath, a rural community about 20 miles south of Crescent City. The house is high on the bluff called Requa, with a view of the Pacific and the mouth of the Klamath River.

"I sort of feel it's my fault," she said of her son's death. "I just wish I'd never told him about (the house) in the beginning."

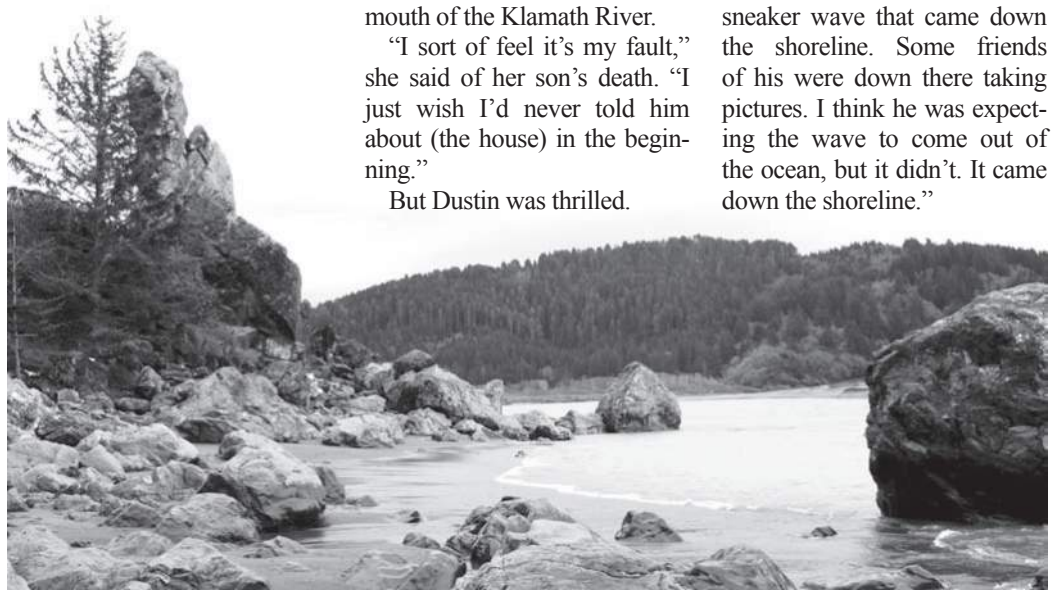
But Dustin was thrilled.

"He was so happy to come down here to start a new life," his mother said. "He got clean and sober. He finished all his community service. Everything he had to do. He had a chance to have his own house. His grandmother—my mother—was going to give him her sister's house. He just beamed when he found out he could have that opportunity. He started working so hard to make that happen."

Two weeks ago, Jon Weber drove his son to Klamath and stayed a few days helping him fix up the house, then returned home.

Dustin posted on Facebook a picture of the view from his new home.

"He was a great kid," the father said. "My son flirted with death a couple times and got around it. This time he didn't see it coming. There was a sneaker wave that came down the shoreline. Some friends of his were down there taking pictures. I think he was expecting the wave to come out of the ocean, but it didn't. It came down the shoreline."



AP

The Klamath River flows into the Pacific Ocean on Sunday, March 13, 2011 near Klamath, Calif. Dustin Weber, 25, was swept out to sea by a tsunami swell on Friday when he hiked down to a small beach on the north side of the river with two friends.

Giffords' friends make her a presence in Congress

WASHINGTON (AP)—Rep. Gabrielle Giffords' chair sits empty as she recovers from a gunshot wound to the head, yet three friends are ensuring she still has a presence in Congress.

At nearly every hearing of the House Armed Services Committee, the panel's top Democrat, Rep. Adam Smith of Washington state, carves out a few precious minutes from his time-limited turn quizzing military officials to ask a question on behalf of Giffords.

Giffords

"She's a critical member of the committee—has been for the four years that she's been here," Smith said in a recent interview, just days after visiting Giffords at a Houston hospital. He confers with the Arizona Democrat's staff on questions that Giffords might ask about energy or the two major military installations in her district, the Army's Fort Huachuca and Davis-Monthan Air Force Base.

"I want to make sure her initiatives get in there," he said.

This Tuesday night, Smith will join Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., and Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., in hosting a fundraiser for Giffords' 2012 campaign at the International Brotherhood of Teamsters building a few blocks from the Capitol. Members of the Democratic leadership also are pitching in.

"I've been protecting her flank politically," said Wasserman Schultz, who is intent on making sure Giffords has a hefty account for her next election.

While Giffords will need months of rehabilitation from her traumatic brain injury, her three friends are filling in the gaps of the three-term congresswoman's daily work, striving to keep her politically viable during her extended absence from Washington.

When she will be well enough to return to work remains unclear. In the latest update, Giffords' doctors said Friday that her ability to walk and talk has improved and they had removed her breathing tube. They hope to reattach a piece of her skull in May.

Tragedy, a debilitating illness, advancing age—all have been sobering realities in Congress, but the demands on a lawmaker and staff continue unabated.

Spanking 1-year-olds is common in depressed dads

CHICAGO (AP)—Just like new moms, new fathers can be depressed, and a study found a surprising number of sad dads spanked their 1-year-olds.

About 40 percent of depressed fathers in a survey said they'd spanked kids that age, versus just 13 percent of fathers who weren't depressed. Most dads also had had recent contact with their child's doctor—a missed opportunity to get help, authors of the study said.

The American Academy of Pediatrics and many child development experts warn against spanking children of any age. Other studies have shown that kids who are spanked are at risk of being physically abused and becoming aggressive themselves.

The researchers said spanking is especially troubling in children who are only 1, because they could get injured and they "are unlikely to understand the connection between their behavior and subsequent punishment."

The study was released online Monday in the journal Pediatrics.

The authors analyzed data on 1,746 fathers from a nationally representative survey in 16 large U.S. cities, conducted in 1999-2000. Lead author Dr. Neal Davis said that was the most recent comprehensive data on the subject, and he believes it is relevant today. Depression among fathers is strongly tied to unemployment rates, which are much higher now than a decade ago, he said.

ON THE NET

American Academy of Pediatrics: http://www.aap.org

The men were questioned about depression symptoms, spanking and interactions with their 1-year-olds, but weren't asked why they spanked or whether it resulted in physical harm.

Overall, 7 percent of dads had experienced recent major depression.

Some likely had a history of depression, but in others it was probably tied to their children's birth, similar to postpartum depression in women, Davis said. A pediatrician now with Intermountain Healthcare in Murray, Utah, Davis did the research while at the University of Michigan.

Postpartum depression is more common in women; by some estimates as many as 25 percent develop it shortly after childbirth. Severe cases have been linked with suicide and with deaths in children including several high-profile drownings.

Less is known about depression in new dads and the study raises important awareness about an under-recognized problem, said Dr. Craig Garfield, an assistant pediatrics professor at Northwestern University and co-author of a Pediatrics editorial.

With fathers increasingly spending time on child care, including taking their kids to routine doctor visits, it's important for pediatricians to pay attention to dads' mental health, Garfield said. Close to 80 percent of depressed and non-depressed dads had recent contact with their child's doctor, according to the study.

Davis said his office is working on screening dads for depression and offering referrals to mental health services—a practice he and his co-authors recommend for all pediatricians.

Chris Illuminati, a Lawrenceville, N.J., writer and stay-at-home dad with a 1-year-old son, says he read postpartum brochures the pediatrician gave his wife during an office visit. He said he found himself silently answering yes to questions about symptoms.

Illuminati said he'd never experienced depression, but starting from the time his son was a few months old, he began feeling unusually down, sleep-deprived, trapped and resentful toward a baby who slept fitfully and had disrupted his life.

ACROSS THE NATION

Police: 5 killed in I-10 crash in Baton Rouge

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP)—Louisiana State Police say five people have been killed in a fiery head-on crash on Interstate 10 in Baton Rouge. Lt. Doug Cain says a westbound car at about 8 p.m. Sunday crossed the median and into the path of an eastbound car. He says the five in the car traveling east were killed and burned beyond recognition. He says two people in the car that crossed the median are critically injured. The eastbound lanes of I-10 at Highland Road were closed late Sunday.

2 Va. deputies fatally shot, suspect killed

VANSANT, Va. (AP)—A gunman opened fire on sheriff's deputies responding to a robbery call at a rural salvage yard on Sunday, killing two and injuring two others before being killed in a shootout, Virginia State Police said. The two injured Buchanan County deputies were in serious condition, said State Police Sgt. Steve Lowe. At about 2 p.m., deputies were investigating a complaint from the owner of Roger's Service Center in the southwestern Virginia community of Vansant. He said his business was being robbed and he had blocked the suspect's vehicle with his own. Lowe said when deputies and state police arrived, shots were fired. Two Buchanan County deputies were hit and died at the scene.

Pilots lock down cockpit over praying passengers

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Pilots on an Alaska Airlines flight locked down the cockpit and alerted authorities after three passengers conducted an elaborate orthodox Jewish prayer ritual during their Los Angeles-bound flight. Airline spokeswoman Bobbie Egan says the crew of Flight 241 from Mexico City became alarmed Sunday after the men began the ritual, which involves tying leather straps and small wooden boxes to the body. The cockpit was placed on a security lockdown—meaning the door couldn't be opened even for pilots to leave briefly.

Asia

Japan begins to dig for dead amid nuclear crisis

TAKAJO, Japan (AP)—Rescue workers used chain saws and hand picks Monday to dig out bodies in Japan's devastated coastal towns, as Asia's richest nation faced a mounting humanitarian, nuclear and economic crisis in the aftermath of a massive earthquake and tsunami that likely killed thousands.

Millions of people spent a third night without water, food or heating in near-freezing temperatures along the devastated northeastern coast; the containment building of a second nuclear reactor exploded because of hydrogen buildup while the stock market plunged over the likelihood of huge losses by Japanese industries including big names such as Toyota and Honda.

More than 10,000 people are estimated to have died in Friday's double-headed tragedy, which caused unimaginable deprivation for people of this industrialized country that has not seen such hardships since World War II. In many areas there is no running water, no power and four- to five-hour waits for gasoline. People are suppressing hunger with instant noodles or rice balls while dealing with the loss of loved ones and homes.

"People are surviving on little food and water. Things are simply not coming," said Hajime Sato, a government official in Iwate prefecture, one of the three hardest hit.

"We have repeatedly asked the government to help us, but the government is overwhelmed by the scale of damage and enormous demand for food and water," he told The Associated Press.

"We are only getting around just 10 percent of what we have requested. But we are patient because everyone in the quake-hit areas is suffering."

He said local authorities were also running out of body bags and coffins.

"We have requested funeral homes across the nation to send us many body bags and coffins. But we simply don't have enough. We just did not expect such a thing to happen. It's just overwhelming."

Sato said local authorities may ask foreign funeral homes to send supplies.

The pulverized coast has been hit by more than 150 aftershocks since Friday, the latest one a 6.2 magnitude quake that was followed by a new tsunami scare Monday. Abandoning their search operations, soldiers told residents of the devastated shoreline in Soma, the worst hit town in Fukushima prefecture, to run to higher ground.

Sirens wailed and soldiers shouted "find high ground! Get out of here!" Several uniformed soldiers were seen leading an old woman up a muddy hillside. The warning turned out to be a false alarm.

"This is Japan's most severe crisis since the war ended 65 years ago," Prime Minister Naoto Kan told reporters Sunday, adding that Japan's future would be decided by its response.

Search parties arrived in Soma for the first time since Friday to dig out bodies. Ambulances stood by and body bags were laid out in an area cleared of debris, as firefighters used hand picks and chain saws to clear an indescribable jumble of broken timber, plastic sheets, roofs, sludge, twisted cars, tangled powerlines and household goods.

Helicopters buzzed overhead, surveying the destruction that spanned the horizon. Ships were flipped over near roads, a half mile (a kilometer) inland. Officials said one-third of the city of 38,000 people was flooded and thousands were missing.

According to officials, more than 1,800 people have been confirmed dead—including 200 people whose bodies were found Sunday along the coast—and more than 1,400 were missing in Friday's disasters. Another 1,900 were injured.

But police in Miyagi prefecture say 10,000 people are likely dead in their area alone. Miyagi, with a population of 2.3 million, was one of the hardest hit areas.

"I'm giving up hope," said Hajime Watanabe, 38, a construction industry worker, who was the first in line at a closed gas station in Sendai, about 60 miles (100 kilometers) north of Soma. Just then, an emergency worker came over and told him that if the station opens at all, it would pump gasoline only to emergency teams and essential government workers.

"I never imagined we would be in such a situation" Watanabe said. "I had a good life before. Now we have nothing. No gas, no electricity, no water."

He said he was surviving with his family on 60 half-liter bottles of water his wife had stored in case of emergencies like this. He walked two hours to find a convenience store that was open and waited in line to buy dried ramen noodles.

The government has sent 100,000 troops to spearhead the aid effort. It has sent 120,000 blankets, 120,000 bottles of water and 29,000 gallons (110,000 liters) of gasoline plus food to the affected areas. However electricity would take days to restore.

At least 1.4 million households had gone without water since the quake struck and some 1.9 million households were without electricity.

AP

Japanese emergency crews work to free a body as it sits pinned among concrete sea barriers Monday, March 14, 2011, in Toyoma, Japan, three days after a giant quake and tsunami struck the country's northeastern coast.

Second explosion at stricken Japan nuke plant

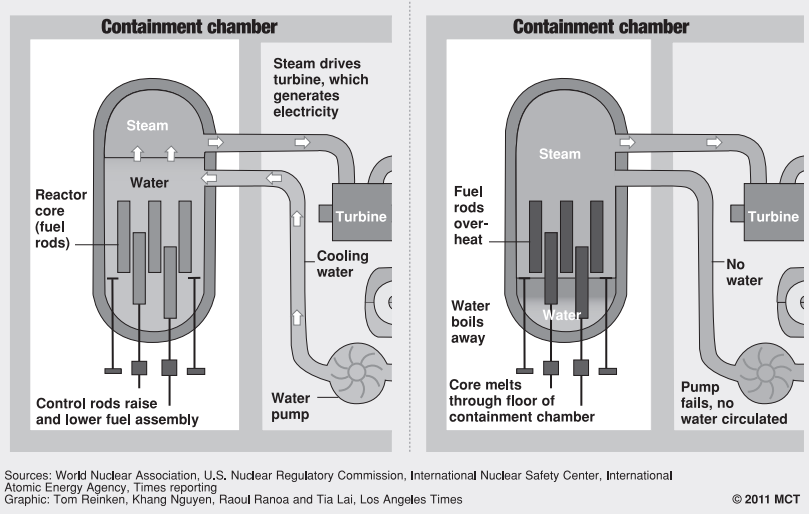
SOMA, Japan (AP)—The second hydrogen explosion in three days rocked Japan's stricken Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant Monday, sending a massive column of smoke into the air and wounding 6 workers. The plant's operator said radiation levels at the reactor were still within legal limits.

The explosion at the plant's Unit 3, which authorities have been frantically trying to cool following a system failure in the wake of a massive earthquake and tsunami, triggered an order for hundreds of people to stay indoors, said Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano.

Tokyo Electric Power Co. said radiation levels at Unit 3 were 10.65 microsieverts, significantly under the 500 microsieverts at which a nuclear operator must file a report to the government.

The blast follows a similar explosion Saturday that took place at the plant's Unit 1, which injured four workers and caused mass-evacuations.

Japan's nuclear safety agency said 6 workers were injured in Monday's explosion but it was not immediately clear how, or whether they were exposed to radiation. They were all conscious, said the agency's Ryohei Shomi.


Perilous problem
A breakdown of generators used to power pumps that circulate cooling water raises concerns about a possible meltdown at Japan's Fukushima No. 1 power plant.
Normal operation
Water is circulated in the reactor vessel to cool the radioactive fuel rods, which generate steam to create electricity
Containment chamber
Steam drives turbine, which generates electricity
Steam
Water
Reactor core (fuel rods)
Turbine
Cooling water
Control rods raise and lower fuel assembly
Water pump
Worst-case scenario
Without water, the fuel rods overheat, the reactor core melts through chamber floor, and radioactivity spreads to the environment
Containment chamber
Steam
Fuel rods overheat
Turbine
No water
Water boils away
Water
Core melts through floor of containment chamber
Pump fails, no water circulated
Sources: World Nuclear Association, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, International Nuclear Safety Center, International Atomic Energy Agency, Times reporting
Graphic: Tom Reinken, Khang Nguyen, Raoul Ranoa and Tia Lai, Los Angeles Times
© 2011 MCT

The reactor's inner containment vessel holding nuclear rods was intact, Edano said, allaying some fears of the risk to the environment and public. TV footage of the building housing the reactor appeared to show similar damage to Monday's blast, with outer walls shorn off, leaving only a skeletal frame.

More than 180,000 people have evacuated the area in recent days, and up to 160 may have been exposed to radiation.

Earlier Monday, pressure had jumped inside Unit 3, forcing the evacuation of 21 workers. But they returned to work after levels appeared to ease.

ASIAN BRIEFS

China rejects comparison with N. Africa uprisings

BEIJING (AP)—China on Monday rejected any comparison between itself and the Middle East and north African countries where popular uprisings toppled autocrats. Premier Wen Jiabao told a news conference at the end of the country's annual legislative session that the country was wrestling with finding the right mix between creating jobs and fighting inflation. The result is key to maintaining stability amid a growing gap between rich and poor, and is a big concern of the government. He said it was not right to compare China with protest-hit countries. "We have followed closely the turbulence in some North African and Middle Eastern countries. We believe it is not right to draw an analogy between China and those countries," Wen said.

Fire kills 2 doctors, 4 others in Philippines home

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Firefighters say a fire razed a home in Manila, killing a family of four and their two helpers. Fire officer Albert Flores said the victims were two medical doctors who owned the house, their daughters, aged 17 and 21, and two people who worked for the family. The bodies of the six were found huddled in a room on the second floor of the house, some locked in embrace. They apparently died of suffocation. Flores said the fire broke out before dawn Monday in the ground-floor garage. The family may have woken up too late to escape, or been prevented from doing so by metal grills on the windows. The cause of the fire is being investigated.

NW Pakistan ambush kills 9, threatens peace deal

PARACHINAR, Pakistan (AP)—Gunmen ambushed a van and killed nine civilians Sunday in a stretch of northwestern Pakistan covered by a new peace deal among tribes from rival Muslim sects. Security forces responding to the attack killed three alleged gunmen, police said. The clash does not bode well for the future of the peace accord in the Kurram tribal region, which ended a four-year conflict that cost hundreds of lives. Police official Mir Chaman Khan said the attack occurred in Hangu district along the main road from Kurram to the city of Peshawar. The road had recently reopened after the Shiite Muslim Toori and Bangash tribes inked the deal with the Mangal and other Sunni Muslim tribes.

World

Gadhafi forces drive rebels from key oil town

BENGHAZI, Libya (AP)—Moammar Gadhafi's forces swept rebels from a key oil town Sunday with waves of strikes from warships, tanks and warplanes, closing on the opposition-held eastern half of Libya as insurgents pleaded for a U.N.-imposed no-fly zone.

Gadhafi's troops have been emboldened by a string of victories in the struggle for Libya's main coastal highway but their supply lines are stretched and their dependence on artillery, airstrikes and naval attacks makes it hard for them to swiftly consolidate control of territory, particularly at night.

The insurgents claimed they moved back into the strategic town of Brega after dusk in a fast-moving battle with a constantly shifting front line, destroying armored vehicles and capturing dozens of fighters from Gadhafi's elite Khamis Brigade.

The United States sent U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Rodham Clinton to meet with rebel leaders in Paris on Monday as world powers consider trying to ground Gadhafi's air force.

The Obama administration and other governments have expressed deep reservations about a tactic that would require them to destroy Gadhafi's air defenses and possibly shoot down his planes. The Arab League raised the pressure on the U.S. and its NATO allies on Saturday by asking the U.N. Security Council to impose a no-fly zone, but a day later they appeared no closer to taking action.

"This was a rare decision of the Arab League," rebel spokesman Abdul Basit al-Muzayrik told Al-Jazeera. "We call on the international community to quickly make a firm decision against these crimes."

The poorly equipped and loosely organized rebel fighters said throughout the day they were fleeing the oil town of Brega under heavy attack, losing a vital source of fuel for their vehicles and leaving Gadhafi's military less than 150 miles from the main opposition city of Benghazi.

A spokesman for Gadhafi's military declared it had seized control of the town and was "dealing with the situation."

It was impossible to independently confirm either side's account because it has become too dangerous for reporters to operate in the contested area.

Ajdabiya is the only other major population center between Gadhafi's forces and the rebel headquarters. If his successes continue, the Libyan strongman will soon face the choice of consolidating his control of the Mediterranean coast or moving swiftly toward Benghazi and the prospect of a devastating battle.

"Benghazi doesn't deserve a full-scale military action," army spokesman Milad Hussein told reporters in the capital, Tripoli. "They are a group of rats and vermin and as soon as we go in, they will raise their hands and surrender."

Gadhafi's navy, army and air force began pounding Brega with artillery, rockets and bombs Sunday morning and didn't let up all day, forcing doctors and wounded people from the town's hospital with a missile strike, several rebels told The Associated Press after fleeing.

"There wasn't any time to breathe, to do anything," one fighter with responsibility for logistics said by telephone as he fled Brega for Ajdabiya, about 50 miles (80 kilometers) by road to the east. Explosions went off in the background.

Speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation, he said the opposition was bracing for conflict in Ajdabiya by evacuating doctors and the wounded from there, too.

He said some rebels had gathered in a seaside village a few miles east of Brega, hoping to halt Gadhafi's forces. He said more fighters from rebel strongholds in the east were heading to Ajdabiya to prepare for a battle there.

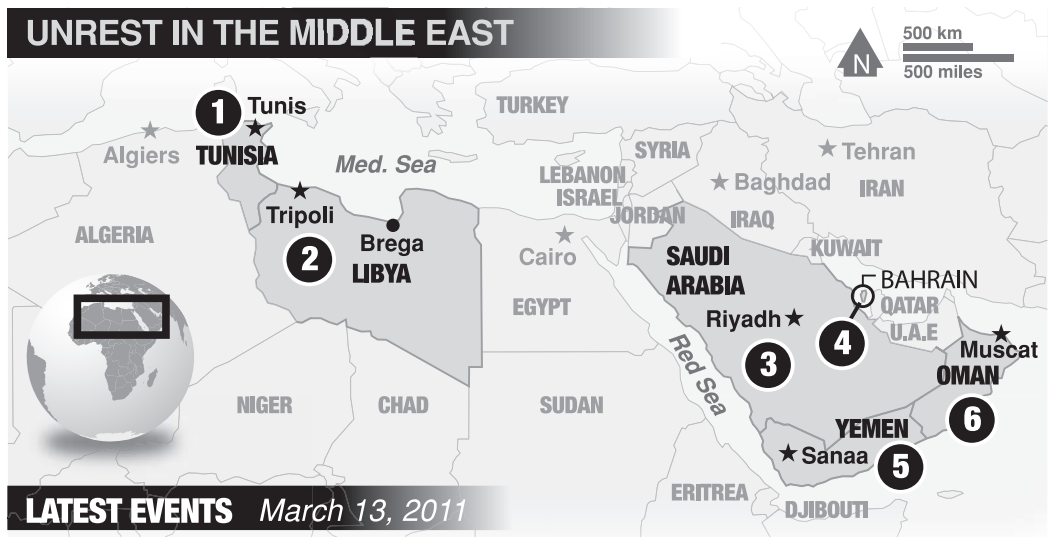
The rebels were trying to secure the southern and eastern roads to Ajdabiya and storing provisions and weapons there after the loss of free access to gasoline in Brega.

"I think they are bombing heavily because they want to win time before a no-fly zone is imposed," the rebel shouted over the phone.

An opposition leader in Ajdabiya said the rebels planned to retake Brega and were attacking Gadhafi's forces with guns and roadside bombs as they moved in reinforcements from government-held cities in the west.

Another rebel said that after their initial defeat, opposition forces destroyed armored vehicles and captured dozens of fighters from Gadhafi's elite Khamis Brigade, driving others back into Brega's airport.

A fourth opposition fighter told The Associated Press by telephone that celebrations had broken out in the nearby city of Ajdabiya, and celebratory gunfire, honking and shouting could be heard in the background.



WORLD BRIEFS

Chavez: Foes seek Libya-like uprising in Venezuela

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—President Hugo Chavez accused his political opponents on Sunday of trying to divide the military as part of a broader plan aimed at spurring a Libya-like uprising in Venezuela following next year's presidential election. Chavez said such a conflict would give Washington a justification to lead a military invasion of Venezuela. "They want to divide the armed forces," said Chavez, referring to Venezuela's opposition. "The Yankee empire, the CIA and the State Department is behind them." "The empire has a plan that has worked in Libya," he said during his weekly television and radio program. Chavez commonly refers to the United States as "the empire."

Tunisia orders curfew in restive mining town

TUNIS, Tunisia (AP)—Tunisian authorities have ordered a curfew in a central mining town amid simmering unrest following deadly clashes between police and protesters, the state news agency reported Sunday. The 7 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew, initiated Saturday, was imposed on Metlaoui, where clashes two days earlier left two people dead and 20 injured, the TAP agency said. Troops dispersed protesters in lingering unrest Saturday. The move marked the latest sign of Tunisia's struggle to restore stability after a revolution that ousted autocratic President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali after 23 years in power and sparked uprisings in the Arab world.

Abbas calls killing of Israeli settlers despicable

JERUSALEM (AP)—The Palestinian president, in a rare interview to the Israeli media, has condemned the deadly attack on a Jewish settler family over the weekend as "despicable, immoral and inhuman." Mahmoud Abbas told Israel Radio that the gory images of the victims—parents, two children and an infant—"cause anyone humane to ache and cry." In Monday's interview, Abbas also said he would not allow attacks to multiply. Israel has indirectly blamed the Palestinian government for the carnage, suggesting the killings were the product of incitement it allows.

Yemen clashes and Bahrain chaos as protests deepen

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—Yemeni police firing from rooftops wounded more than 100 in a protesters' camp Sunday and anti-government demonstrators paralyzed Bahrain's capital as unrest deepened in two of Washington's most critical allies in the region.

The ruler of Oman, another key Western partner, shifted some lawmaking powers to officials outside the royal family in what an analyst called a historic change.

Meanwhile, Saudi authorities tolerated 200 activists demanding the release of detainees in defiance of stern warnings of crackdowns on pro-democracy rallies.

The range of responses—from attacks to appeasement—underscored the different gambits at play. Some regimes are looking to battle their way out while others turn to rapid reforms in a bid to quell dissent inspired by groundswell for change across the Arab world.

Yemen's president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, has increasingly turned to confrontation after protesters rebuffed his offer to bow out with elections in 2013.

Near Sanaa University, an encampment of demonstrators came under twin attacks: police firing from rooftop positions, and a ground assault by security forces and government backers armed with clubs and knives. Mohammad al-Abahi, a doctor in charge of a makeshift hospital near the university, said more than 100 people were injured, including 20 from tear gas inhalation.

In the southern Aden province, it was the protesters on the offensive—storming a police station and seizing weapons after police fled, witnesses said.

Yemen—hit by a wave of protests since mid-February—is considered by Washington to be a vital front-line ally against one of the world's most active al-Qaida branches. But the U.S. patience for Saleh's tactics appears to be wearing thin.

Bahrain's showdown also has reached the one-month mark with no end in sight. There are now fears the tiny kingdom could be stumbling toward open sectarian conflict between the ruling minority Sunnis and Shiites, who account for 70 percent of the nation's 525,000 people.

The mostly Shiite protesters first took to the streets to air their allegations of widespread discrimination. But the calls have been growing to topple the entire ruling monarchy after attacks and crackdowns by security forces in the strategic nation, which hosts the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet.

Protesters displayed their power with a new and disruptive strategy—blocking the main highway into the financial district in the capital Manama, one of the Gulf's investment and banking centers. Riot police firing tear gas eventually cleared the barricades, but traffic was snarled for miles (kilometers) and morning commuters were enraged.

"Bahrain is no longer stable," growled Sawsan Mohammed, 30, who works in the financial district.

In some neighborhoods, vigilantes set up checkpoints to try to keep outsiders from entering. Some Shiite protesters claimed that pro-government gangs were roaming some areas armed with clubs and other weapons.

At Bahrain University, clashes broke out between protesters and government backers. Two protesters sustained serious head injures and hundreds looked for medical help, mostly with breathing problems from tear gas, hospital officials said on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

In Pearl Square—a landmark site occupied by demonstrators—security forces surrounded the tent compound, shooting tear gas in the largest effort to disrupt the protesters since a crackdown last month left four dead.

Police withdrew after activists stood their ground and chanted "Peaceful! peaceful!"

The turmoil came a day after a visit by U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates, who urged Bahrain's leaders to make quick progress toward reforms. Washington and its Gulf Arab allies worry that Shiite powerhouse Iran could use instability in Bahrain as a foothold to expand its influence in the region.

Focus

Grim recovery effort along Japan's coast

AP

A statue is all that remains of a house in the seaside town of Toyoma, northern Japan, Monday, March 14, 2011, three days after a giant quake and tsunami struck the country's northeastern coast.

By MARK MAGNIER and BARBARA DEMICK
LOS ANGELES TIMES

SENDAI, Japan—A smashed white pickup truck wedged beneath another vehicle was marked, "Day 13th, 3:15 p.m." in Japanese characters.

The numbers indicated the day of the month and time two bodies had been found inside the truck. A team of eight soldiers struggled to remove the unidentified corpses from the truck's cab Sunday. They lifted them onto a soggy tatami mat, covered them with a blue and yellow blanket, then heaved the load onto their flatbed army truck.

"Push it back further," Japanese Self-Defense Forces officer Tomonori Yoshinaga told the men. "We still have more to go."

A few minutes later, they found another body, rigor mortis fixing it in a sitting position, within the mess left by the earthquake and tsunami that slammed Sendai, a coastal city in northeast Japan shortly after 2:30 p.m. Friday.

"This work is heart-breaking," said Yoshinaga, a large army phone system on his back, before heading off to the next site.

Throughout Sendai, as emergency crews and officials began to get a clearer look at the degree of damage in one of the worst hit areas, residents struggled with the aftermath of mother nature's fury in their own ways. Some searched for lost loved ones, virtually all worried about food, water or housing, while still others tried to resume normal lives in the midst of overwhelming scenes of devastation.

At the Sendai airport, where the tsunami waves plowed through the runways, the parking lot early Monday looked like the mess made by an angry toddler who dumped his toy cars in the mud willy nilly. A small plane rested with its propeller nose wedged against a railing amid heaps of late model Subarus and Toyotas that still glinted through the mud and twigs.

Behind an airport warehouse, workers pointed to a body in a ditch. As an ambulance crew with a stretcher removed what appeared to be the remains of a middle aged man, one of his arms poked out from under a pink fuzzy blanket as though he had been holding a cell phone.

"We are under orders to find people. Survivors or victims. I don't think there is anybody alive but we will look," said one uniformed military officer.

In the downtown area, the office towers glistened in the morning sunlight. One could see barely any obvious trace of Friday's disaster. But the stark modernity of 21st century Japan made the deprivation more startling.

People with shopping bags wait in a queue that, except for their immaculate clothing, looks straight out of the Soviet Union. The only store operating is a Lawson's convenience shop. The sliding glass doors open every few minutes to admit five customers; they're each permitted to buy two bottles of mineral water and two packages of noodles.

"We're getting worried now. There is no food, no water," said Hitomi Auzai, 25, an engineering student. "It's almost three days now."

The destruction in the Natori area of Sendai included jumbles of splintered wood and mounds of mud, so much mud. The half-buried possessions that amused and comforted residents now provided a vivid reminder of nature's fury, its ability to snuff out lives in an instant with indifference.

The devastation had left a down-the-rabbit-hole world, where up is down, with boats resting on roads and cars seemingly parked in the water.

The handiwork of the wall of water has left much of the construction debris, smashed furniture and upended street lamps bunched up into tight clumps as the tsunami receded almost as quickly as it arrived.

The noses of two cars slanted skyward against each other, forming an improbable triangle. The guts of houses pushed out through broken windows where the water left, held in place by nothing but the twisted remnants of venetian blinds. Wheelchairs and deflated soccer balls, bottles and plastic remain embedded in once pristine rice fields, making a mockery of the order that Japan craves, a monster force from the oceans it depends on for food and foreign trade.

Makiko Oshiro, a volunteer search and rescue worker walked through the wasteland with a tiny red dog on a leash that looked too small to sniff out anyone who might somehow still be alive. She had just found the dog wandering around a nearby field of debris, itself a rare survivor. It was scared, lost and missing its owners.

"Today's the first day the water receded enough to search," she said, her boots mired in mud. "But we're only finding bodies. I don't see much hope anyone could live through this. We'll probably find hundreds more bodies under there before we're done."

A few hundred yards away, Fumiyo Saito, 70, a retiree, emerged from a battered house. He had spent the afternoon looking for his missing cousin and brother-in-law. The house was badly damaged, but was still standing. "That gives me a little hope they're still alive." he said.

As he moved on, a helicopter flew overhead and soldiers struggled to unearth the narrow lane lost under the mess. A massive piece of construction equipment with tank tracks and a powerful claw that could be used to dig out the living was getting much less use than a blunt bulldozer more suited to shoving and pushing debris with little precision.

All around was evidence of nature's seemingly capricious hand, an occasional house left standing while the rest of the neighborhood had floated away. The mud-caked appliances, splintered guitars and torn easy chairs only hinting at the destructive power that slammed the village.

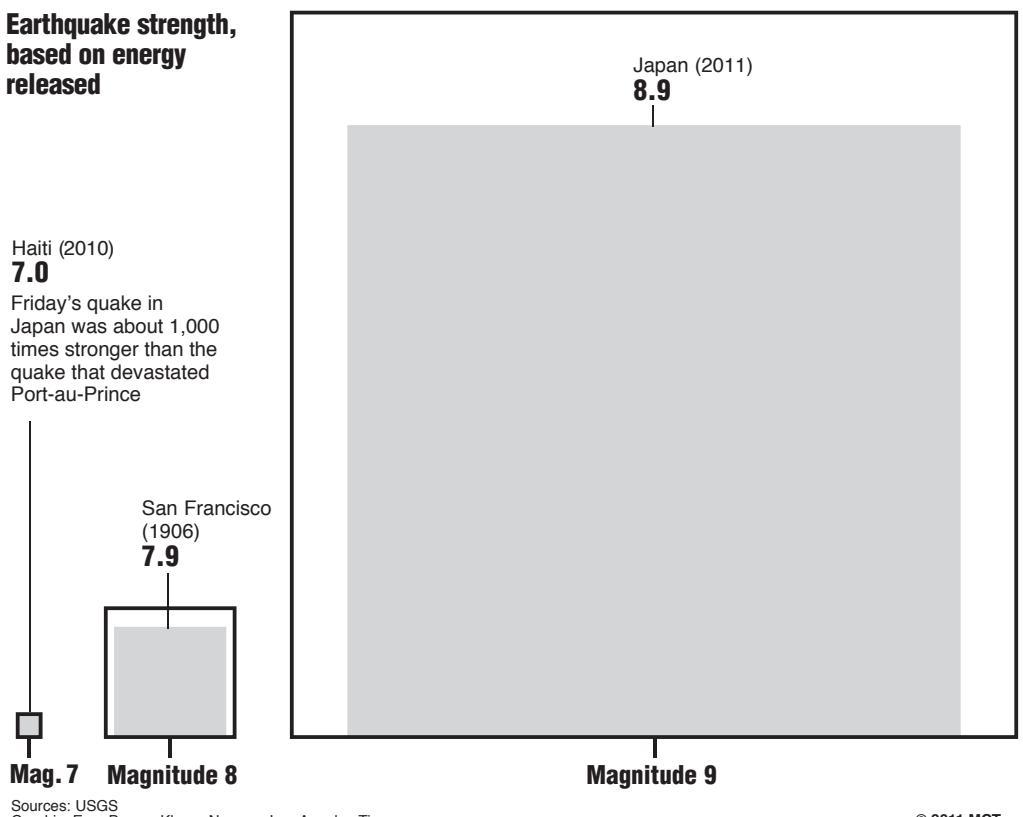
Haruo Endo, 58, stood on her porch pulling towels from a clothesline Sunday afternoon, surrounded by wreckage and sadness and loss in a vain attempt to impose order on the sea of chaos.

A homemaker, she had been in her car nearby when the earthquake struck. She heard the warning siren wail and raced for higher ground. The next thing she remembers, she was watching images of the disaster unfold on her tiny dashboard TV.

"I lived here 20 years and never imagined such destruction was possible," she said, reaching down to comfort her anxious grandchild. "We have insurance, but I don't know how much it will cover. Our cousin used to live just there (down the street). They're still alive, but their house is gone. The sea just took it away."

How earthquakes compare

In the system describing earthquake strength, each whole-point jump in magnitude — from 6.0 to 7.0, for example — means almost 32 times more energy was released. A two-point jump signals in increase of about 1,024 (32 x 32) times the energy.



Sources: USGS
Graphic: Eryn Brown, Khang Nguyen, Los Angeles Times

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Overdrive

2011 Hyundai Equus takes on big names of luxury

By LARRY PRINTZ
THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

It seems improbable to some that Hyundai, the company that once sold a car so inexpensive you could charge it on a credit card, would unleash a car that costs $58,000 and competes with the finest luxury cars in the world.

Those who sniff with disdain may do well to remember that some esteemed luxury automakers had humble origins. Consider, for example, Jaguar, which started as a manufacturer of motorcycle sidecars.

Given that every automaker has access to the same auto-industry suppliers, and thus the same technology, it comes down to this: Which brand do you like, and how much are you willing to pay?

Hyundai is gambling you'll want to pay less. Given its track record, that seems like a good bet.

After all, the 2011 Equus has the luxury features you'd expect in this class: a 608-watt, 17-speaker Lexicon audio system, electronically controlled air suspension, electronic stability control, automatic cruise control, rear-view camera, leather seating surfaces, Alcantara suede headliner, lane departure warning system, driver seat massage, heated and cooled front seats and a heated steering wheel.

Pop for the Equus Ultimate and you'll get even more hedonistic pleasure from its forward-view camera, reclining climate-controlled rear seats with massage, rear-seat refrigerator, rear illuminated vanity mirrors and a rear-seat entertainment system.

NUTS & BOLTS

Engine: 4.6-liter DOHC V8
Wheelbase; 119.9 inches
Length: 203.1 inches
Weight: 4,592 pounds
Cargo space: 16.7 cubic feet
EPA rating (city/highway): 16/24 mpg
Fuel consumption: 15 mpg
Fuel type: Premium recommended
Base price, base model: $58,900
Base price, test model: $65,400

What the Equus doesn't have is a luxury name on the hood. And while the quality of the materials is impressive, although in places, it's still a step down from the best in class. That seems less of an issue once you take the wheel.

A 4.6-liter V8 and six-speed automatic transmission delivers 385 horsepower to the rear wheels with a quiet, creamy smoothness. This velvet fog is enhanced by the ride, which is generally soft, although the air suspension helps keep things mostly in check. The ride quality isn't quite as serene as its competition, but only car connoisseurs will notice.

This is not a driver's car; it is a car to be driven in. For those who prefer comfort, this is the ride. Some pundits have taken Hyundai to task for this. My guess is that because the steering and suspension communicate some information back to the driver, they're expecting this rig to handle with the precision of a German sports sedan. But that's not its mission, despite the conservative styling that looks as if it was created in the fatherland.

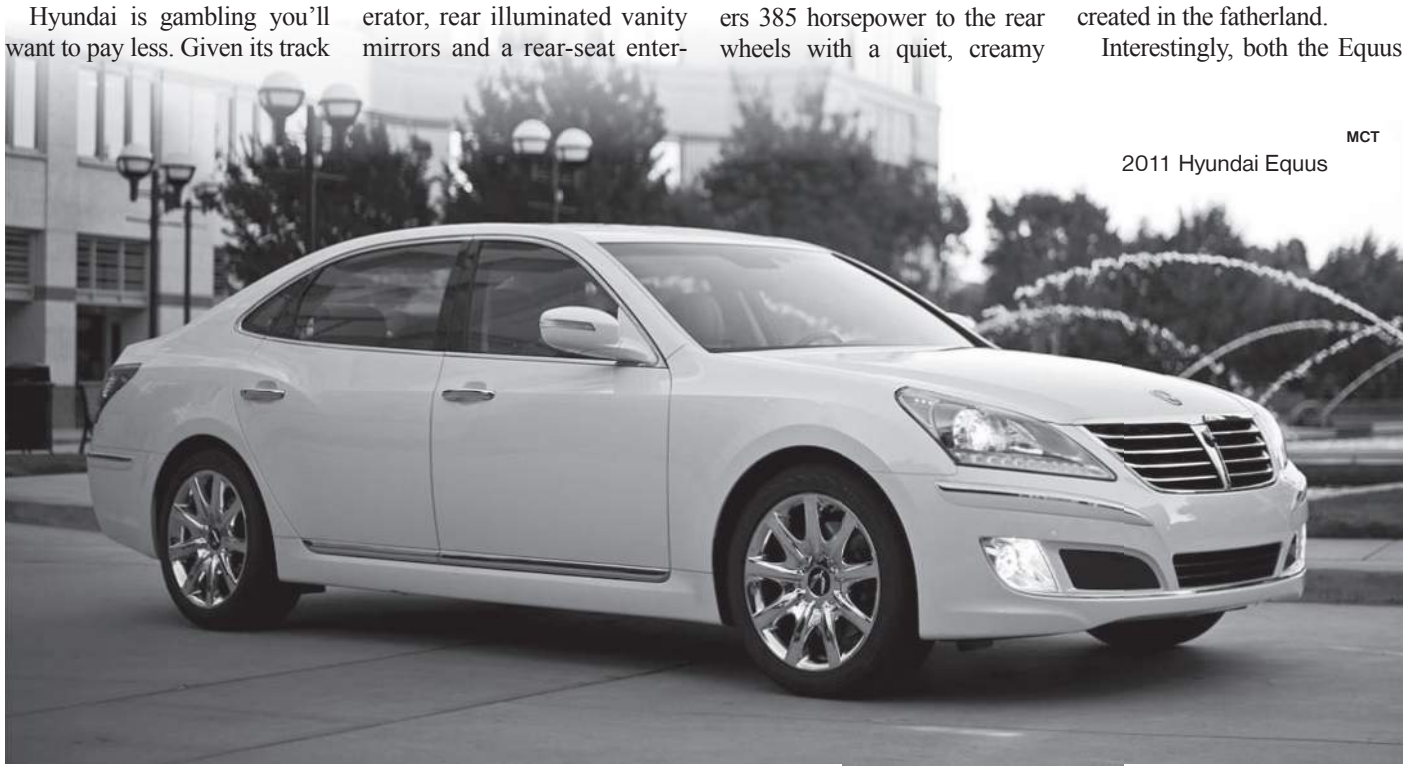
Interestingly, both the Equus and the smaller Genesis, with which the Equus shares a platform, have a handsome, conservative look that's very different from the curvaceous flowing style that's the hallmark of its newer products such as the Sonata and Elantra.

That the Equus delivers 95 percent of the experience of its competition is without question. But is that extra 5 percent the Equus lacks worth the extra $13,000 to $33,000 in cost its competitors charge?

For those who value the driving experience of a premium sedan with exemplary manners and the aura of a premium brand, the answer is yes.

For those who find labels to be an excuse to charge more, the answer is no.

Larry Printz is automotive editor at The Virginian-Pilot *in Norfolk, Va. He can be reached at larry.printz@pilotonline.com*



MCT
2011 Hyundai Equus

Distorted brake rotors can produce shudder

By BRAD BERGHOLDT
MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

QUESTION: I noticed my steering wheel shudders slightly when I firmly press on the brakes. I've never noticed this before and wonder if it could be a result of my kids using the car for a snowboarding trip the previous weekend. They tell me they used the chains and didn't run into anything other than pushing through some deep powder. What do I do? Is this serious?—Kathy Tolin

ANSWER: Your steering wheel shudder is likely caused by distorted front brake rotors, due to heavy brake use. My assumption is the kids didn't select a lower gear when descending one or more steep grades, using only the brakes to maintain speed, which can lead to excessive brake temperature. Brake rotors (also called discs) are typically constructed of cast iron and resemble a thick dinner plate. A caliper uses hydraulic force to clamp two brake pads containing friction material against the rotor, converting the vehicle's kinetic energy into heat. The more stopping one does, the greater the heat produced.

Excessive brake heat can cause the brake rotors to become distorted, more specifically lateral run-out (warping) and thickness variations. In both cases a vibration can result, felt in the steering wheel, brake pedal or seat of the pants as the brakes are used. I should add that in severe cases, other troubling issues can develop related to the rotors and brake pads, but we're likely not in that territory.

A slight amount of brake shudder may be considered harmless but can be annoying. In more severe cases, a loss of braking force can occur, making prompt corrective action important.

The first step for a fix is a brake inspection. The rotors are checked for thickness and variations in thickness, as well as for cracking, scoring and hot spots. If found to be in good condition and there's sufficient thickness remaining, rotors can be resurfaced, either on or off the vehicle. Resurfacing the rotors involves using a lathe to remove a small amount of metal from each side, restoring a true and smooth surface. Rotors must have sufficient thickness to properly dissipate heat.

Wear and previous resurfacing, or machining, can result in a rotor not being thick enough to machine or reuse. In this case, replacement is the only option. Depending on the vehicle, replacement rotors can run about $100-400 per pair—avoid the cheap ones.

At the time of rotor correction or replacement, it makes sense to also renew the brake pads, regardless of their remaining thickness. If the rotors became hot enough to become distorted, the brake pads have likely seen better days. Also, since the calipers need to come off to access the rotors, it would only take a couple of extra minutes to swap in new pads.

Here's my rule of thumb for preserving brakes on descending grades: Select a lower gear if more than three brake applications, lasting for longer than three seconds each, are needed within a span of a few minutes to maintain a safe speed. In a lower gear, the engine will provide hold-back, reducing or even eliminating the need to use the brakes. Third gear provides helpful holdback for most vehicles in the 30-50 mph range, and second gear works well in the 20-40 mph range.

Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him e-mail at under-the-hood@earthlink.net; he cannot make personal replies.

Check mileage before buying ex-rental car

By STEVEN COLE SMITH
THE ORLANDO SENTINEL

QUESTION: We're looking for a used car. I would appreciate your thoughts on the positives and the negatives of buying one from a rental car company.—Martine, Melbourne, Fla.

ANSWER: The positives: You will likely be able to review the maintenance records of a particular car to check for troubling trends. If you can't look at the records, I'd be suspicious. And being that it's a rental, it has likely had regular, per-the-manual servicing. The vehicles usually have popular options such as automatic transmissions and decent stereos. You probably won't find any with manual transmissions and windup windows. Prices are usually set at a fair level, and there is a minimum of haggling. Some rental car companies welcome trade-ins; others don't. Some may offer a limited warranty, or can help with financing.

The negatives: Many agencies are keeping cars a lot longer than they used to. I've rented some cars with more than 40,000 miles on the odometer, unheard of 10 years ago. The cars frequently bounce from city to city, and consequently the car probably hasn't been monitored for long by one mechanic. The car may have done service up north, where salt is used on the roads. While prices are usually fair, there are few genuine bargains. Mostly, though, it's a rental. I treat my rental cars pretty well, but I know some people who don't. And I certainly don't treat them as kindly as a car I own. Plus, when you go to sell or trade the car, a title search will probably show that it was a fleet car in another life, and that can lower resale value.

Bottom line, if I were looking for a nice, mainstream model, I'd consider a rental, but the price would have to be right.

■■■

Q: Are there any oil additives you can recommend to help an engine last longer?—Ted G., Winter Garden, Fla.

A: No. Doesn't mean there aren't good products out there, just none that have shown convincing research.

■■■

Q: I have a new pickup truck, and the dealer is trying to sell me a sort of spray-on bed protector. I have used plastic bed liners before. Can you tell me if one is better than the other?—Phillip Buck, Orlando, Fla.

A: There are arguments for, and against, both, but either one is better than leaving the bed unprotected. Originally the permanent, spray-on-type liners were little more than rubberized or asphalt-based coatings, but the newer ones are very durable, don't fade and do a nice job of resisting bumps and scratches. Properly applied, they are also usually more expensive than the traditional slide-in bed liners.

Those slide-in plastic liners vary in thickness and quality, but the one in my pickup has been there since 2001, and it still looks new. Critics of them say that they can trap water underneath the liners, and can move enough to scratch the paint, which could lead to rust under the liner. I haven't seen that in my truck, or any other truck I've owned, but I suppose it is possible.

Before you make a decision on the dealer's offer, I'd suggest shopping around. Prices can vary considerably on both spray-on and plastic liners.

■■■

Q: How much does it cost to charge up an electric car at your house?—Brad, Orlando

A: It depends on how low the car's batteries are and what time you charge it. Most of the manufacturers are claiming that it costs about $2 for a complete recharge when done at night, when many utility companies charge less.

Steven Cole Smith is the automotive editor at the Orlando Sentinel *in Florida. Send questions to scsmith@orlandosentinel.com.*

Life & Style

'Legally Blonde' scoops 3 Laurence Olivier Awards

Frothy, film-inspired funfest "Legally Blonde: The Musical" won three big prizes at London's Laurence Olivier theater awards Sunday, while Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Love Never Dies" went home empty-handed despite seven nominations.

"Legally Blonde" was named best new musical at Britain's equivalent of Broadway's Tonys. Star Sheridan Smith was crowned best actress in a musical, and Jill Halfpenny took the prize for supporting performer in a musical.

The story of a California girl who proves her mettle at Harvard Law School—based on the 2001 Reese Witherspoon movie—received lukewarm reviews on Broadway and closed in October 2008 after 595 performances. But London's often curmudgeonly critics greeted it as a burst of sunshine in the rainy West End when it opened here in January 2010.

Smith said its appeal was obvious.

"It's credit crunch, terrible weather, and all you want to do is have two and a half hours of escapism," she said.

Lloyd Webber's sequel to monster hit "Phantom of the Opera" had more nominations than any other show, but won nothing. The musical opened a year ago to mixed reviews, and recently announced a series of cast changes as it fights to match "Phantom's" success.

Productions from the state-subsidized National Theatre, Donmar Warehouse and Royal Court Theatre dominated the prizes—just as deep government cuts are about to slash funding to the arts in Britain.

The best new play award went to "Clybourne Park," a provocative comedy about race relations and property prices in Chicago by American playwright Bruce Norris. It was first staged in London at the Donmar and is currently running in the West End.

The National Theatre's "After the Dance," a play about 1920s "pretty young things" sinking into drink and despair, won four prizes, including best revival, costume design, best supporting actor for Adrian Scarborough, and best actress for Nancy Carroll.

"If I don't go into labor in the next 24 hours, I'll be amazed," said a delighted Carroll, who is due to give birth in 12 days.

"After the Dance" is a long-neglected 1939 play by Terence Rattigan, a giant of mid 20th-century theater who is experiencing a resurgent reputation on the centenary of his birth.

Howard Davies won the best director prize for another play at the National, "The White Guard." The adaptation of Mikhail Bulgakov's novel of Soviet upheaval also won the set and lighting awards.

Roger Allam was named best actor in a play for his performance as drunken knight Falstaff in "Henry IV Parts 1 and 2" at Shakespeare's Globe. He joked that the role of the rotund buffoon is "the middle-aged man's Hamlet."

David Thaxton took the musical actor prize for Stephen Sondheim's "Passion" at the Donmar Warehouse.

A production of kids' favorite "The Railway Children," atmospherically staged at London's Waterloo railway station, was named best entertainment.

The Oliviers honor achievements in London theater, musicals, dance and opera.

AP

Actors Patrick Stewart (left) and David Suchet arrive at the 2011 Lawrence Olivier Awards at the Theatre Royal in London, Sunday, March 13, 2011.

Held for the past few years as an industry dinner, the awards were relaunched this year as a glitzy stage show, with performances by West End stars, dance troupes and Barry Manilow, who performed "Copacabana" to a startled but enthusiastic audience.

The evening closed with Angela Lansbury presenting the Olivier Special Award—a lifetime achievement prize—to 80-year-old composer and lyricist Sondheim.

If proof were needed of his continuing popularity, a production of Sondheim's "Into the Woods" at the Open Air Theatre in London's Regent's Park was named best musical revival.

Winners in most categories are chosen by a panel of theater professionals and members of the public

The publicly voted prize for most popular show went to Queen musical "We Will Rock You." Guitarist Brian May noted the show is still running 10 years after opening to "the (worst) reviews ever known to mankind"—using an expletive instead of "worst." ***(AP)***

FROM VAMPIRE TO WEREWOLF

Director leaves 'Twilight' behind for the terror and romance of 'Red Riding Hood'

By ROBERT W. BUTLER
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

Making a blockbuster can do great things for your career. It also has some drawbacks.

Just ask Catherine Hardwicke, a veteran of small independent films ("Thirteen," "Lords of Dogtown") who was tapped to make the first "Twilight" feature. It became the highest-grossing film ever by a woman director.

But working on a multimillion-dollar franchise is not without its traps, particularly when an artist has to curb her creativity to serve a fan base that expects a faithful film version of a beloved book.

Which is why in her post—"Twilight" career Hardwicke, 55, has become fascinated with the story of Little Red Riding Hood.

"This time we didn't have a book to serve," she said in a phone interview from Los Angeles. "All we had was a little fairy tale—and there are 50 versions of that. "Which is the real version? There isn't one. That's what I liked about it."

Hardwicke got involved in what would become "Red Riding Hood" when she was sent a first draft of David Johnson's script, which was being developed by Leonardo DiCaprio's Appian Way productions.

"I read it and thought it was very intriguing, setting up all these interesting characters only loosely based on those in the fairy tale," she said. "But this time I wanted to be able to put my fingerprints all over it, so I started working with David on a new draft. We had an intense couple of months of batting around ideas."

One thing that struck her about the Red Riding Hood story, Hardwicke said, was that children and adults see it quite differently.

"One of the most interesting things about the original fairy tale is that Red is supposed to go straight to her grandmother's house, but she stops to pick flowers. It's like she's getting in touch with her sensual side. And then the wolf begins making advances ... and she basically tells the wolf where he can find her at Grandma's house.

MCT

Actor Gary Oldman, left, works with Director Catherine Hardwicke on the set of the fantasy thriller, "Red Riding Hood," from Warner Bros. Pictures.

"You could interpret her behavior as not only disobedient but provocative. When you're a little kid you don't pick up on that, but as an adult you raise your eyebrows."

Hardwicke and Johnson envisioned a radically different version of the story. This time around Red Riding Hood would be a beautiful young woman rather than a child. She still would have a grandmother living in the woods (and played by Julie Christie), but she would have romantic problems, torn between the young woodsman she has loved for most of her life and a rich fellow to whom she has been betrothed by her financially strapped parents.

And the wolf? Make that a werewolf, actually. He's a supernatural being who has plagued the villagers for years and makes venturing into the forest dangerous.

That interpretation led to another big addition to the story — a famous werewolf hunter, a priest who comes to the village determined to stamp out this heresy by any means necessary.

Hardwicke said she enjoyed the freedom to choose her dream cast.

It started with Amanda Seyfried ("Letters to Juliet," "Mamma Mia!" HBO's "Big Love") in the Red Riding Hood role.

"I asked myself, what actress today really looks like a fairy tale character? And that's Amanda. She's so beautiful in such a specific way that she almost doesn't look real.

"Turns out she can do anything. She's super funny, but she can be super sexy, too. She's got a lot of heart. And those eyes.

"I saw her perform at a benefit for autism. All she was doing was reading some lines, but I was totally hooked. I realized how deep she could go, how vulnerable she could be. Really, she was the only actress I thought of for this."

Hardwicke cast as Peter the woodsman Shiloh Fernandez, a young actor she's been impressed with for some time.

"I tried to cast Shiloh in 'Thirteen,' but it didn't work out. And then he was one of my top four candidates to play Edward in 'Twilight.' I thought he was pretty great, but in that case I already had Kristen Stewart as my leading lady, and we based the casting of Edward on 'chemistry' readings. The actors did some scenes with Kristen, and it was pretty clear that she worked best with Rob Pattinson."

When she put Seyfried and Fernandez together for this project, Hardwicke said, "they really clicked."

Hardwicke and Seyfried traveled to England to audition actors for the second suitor, Henry.

"Max Irons walks into this casting session, and he's a very impressive guy. He stands 6 foot 3 and he's simultaneously charismatic, down-to-earth and soulful. And then I asked about his family and learn that he's Jeremy Irons' son.

"Sold."

Rounding out the cast was Gary Oldman as the werewolf hunter.

"When I found out that Gary was interested I almost lost it. He's one of my idols. He just blows my mind. I was almost afraid to meet him.

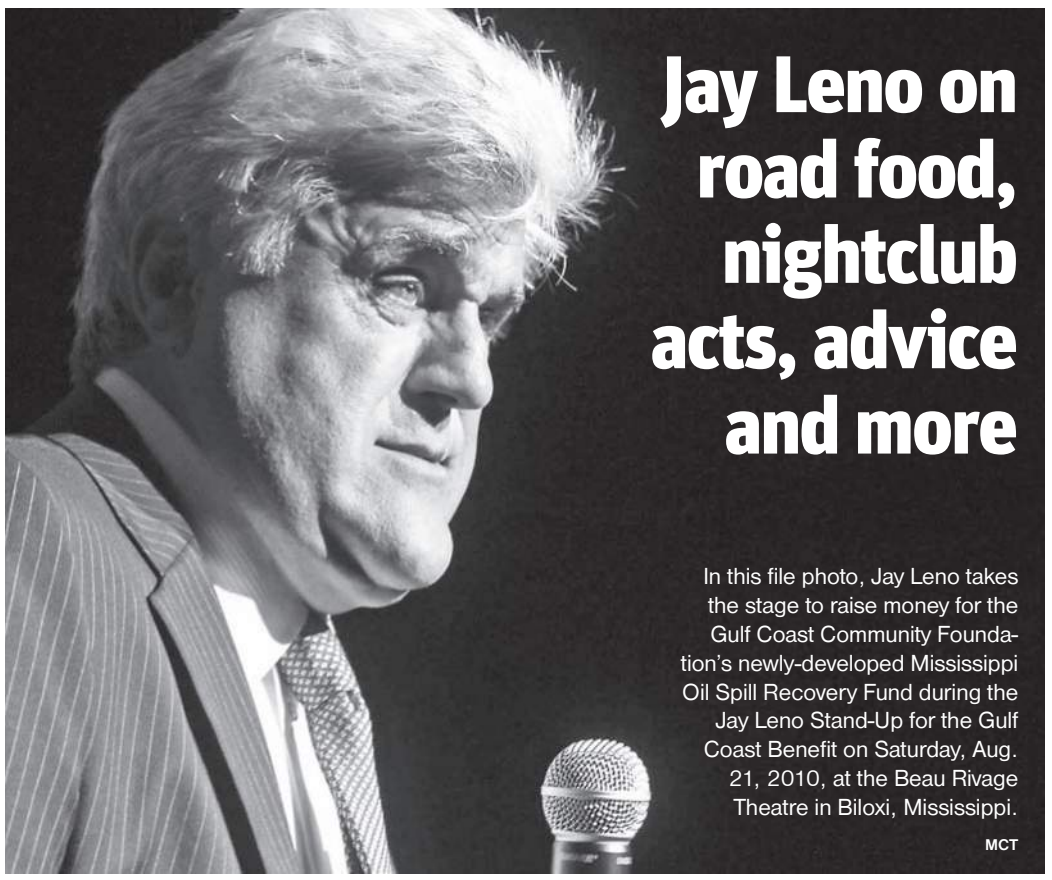
"As it turns out, he's one of the funniest people ever. A mad genius with a wicked sense of humor."

"Red Riding Hood" was shot on a Vancouver, British Columbia, soundstage in a village designed by Hardwicke.

"I looked at lots of old Russian village architecture, then asked myself what a town would look like that had been under siege for years. So all the logs in the buildings have sharpened points, and the front doors are raised above the street so that you can pull up a ladder and be safe at night. And there's a log stockade surrounding everything.

"The set was built of real logs. There's been a beetle plague in the forests around Vancouver, and we used the felled trees to build with.

"Bad for the forest but good for us. That's one reason the set felt so real. You could smell the outdoors when you walked onto the set. It was like being in a real forest."



Jay Leno on road food, nightclub acts, advice and more

In this file photo, Jay Leno takes the stage to raise money for the Gulf Coast Community Foundation's newly-developed Mississippi Oil Spill Recovery Fund during the Jay Leno Stand-Up for the Gulf Coast Benefit on Saturday, Aug. 21, 2010, at the Beau Rivage Theatre in Biloxi, Mississippi. MCT

By NEAL JUSTIN
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

There's an elephant on the line and his name is Conan O'Brien. Jay Leno signed off on a phone interview to promote his standup tour with the stipulation that the "Tonight Show" short-timer's name not come up in conversation. Despite the restriction, Leno did address at least one of his competitors, as well as a number of other topics:

Question: Last time I saw you in person, you had slimmed down a bit. Are you still working out?

Answer: I get two miles each day on the treadmill while watching TV, around 7:30 a.m. downstairs from the office.

Q: 7:30? That's pretty early for a late-night host.

A: Well, when you're the highest-paid guy on a gig, you get there first, you take the crappiest office and you leave last. It just makes it easier that way.

Q: Do you still indulge in things like ribs?

A: Yeah, sure. I'll probably stop at Market Bar-B-Que when I'm in Minneapolis. I've been going there for 30 years. I make it a thing to stop by certain places when I'm on the road, like this place in Kansas that makes chocolate-chip cookies or White House Subs in Atlantic City. It's nice to have one little connection.

Q: How does that help you do your job?

A: Other people with shows are broadcasters who are also comedians. I'm a nightclub comedian who was lucky to get a gig on TV. I love getting a sense of where people are and what's appropriate.

Q: How much of the same material do you recycle year after year in your nightclub act?

A: There's probably about 25 to 30 percent turnover. I mean, I don't do HBO specials. I don't put out CDs. So people don't get tired of the same routine over and over. I had this discussion with a young comedian who was going to do a Comedy Central special. I told him, "Don't give everything away," but he went and did his whole 45-minute act for not a lot of money. Two months later he's in a nightclub and people are yelling, "Hey, I heard that joke on TV last night!" That's what happens.

Q: At one point in your career did you have an hour of material?

A: In this business, you think you have an hour in your first week, then quickly realize you have a lot less. Jerry Seinfeld and I always discuss this. If you're going to play to a cross-section of America, you can't do material on, say, popular music, because if you're not 18 to 30, you're not going to know what's going on.

There's nothing wrong with niche comedians, but they never grow their fan base. Like people who work really blue can leapfrog to the middle and stay there for the rest of their lives. You can take a clean joke and make it dirty, but you can't take dirty jokes and make them cleaner. It's just tricky. Corporate gigs are tricky. Sometimes it's 10 a.m., the company has had a bad year and the boss has just yelled at them and then you come out. Every comic has a corporate nightmare story.

Q: What's yours?

A: There was this company and they asked if I would pick on a few people in the audience. Bob Walker, they said, is a big office flirt. If you do anything about sex or girls, just throw to Bob and you'll get a big laugh. OK, fine. So I do a joke about prostitutes and I say, "Bob, you know what I'm talking about." Big laugh. Later I say, "Bob, you use condoms when you're on the road, right?" Ha, ha, ha. I start in on a third joke, and this woman starts crying and tears out of the building. Apparently, they had completely forgotten that Bob's wife didn't know he was the office flirt.

Q: I think it's safe to assume that Bob's wife is now a David Letterman fan.

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Q: Speaking of Dave, you got a lot of attention for the Super Bowl ad you two did last year. I think a lot of us were hoping that might rekindle a friendship. Did you?

A: Yeah, I think that's fair to say. You know, they can take shots at me, but I don't do it. I don't think it makes for a good atmosphere. I'll shake hands with anybody. You want to be my friend, OK.

Q: Do you foresee a day when you two might be friends again?

A: We'll see. We're not getting any younger.

Q: When was the last time you were really nervous?

A: Really nervous? Let's see ... the White House Correspondents Dinner with Ronald Reagan. It was my first time. I was backstage and this general-looking guy says, "This is the president. You don't do jokes about the president." Yessir. Yessir. Next guy who comes up to me is (Secretary of State) George Shultz. He says, "Ronnie loves a good joke. Nail him. He'll think it's hilarious."

Q: What did you do?

A: My opening joke was congratulating Nancy for being named humanitarian of the year and beating out that conniving little bitch, Mother Teresa.

Q: What's the last bit of great advice you got?

A: Hmmmm. I'll call Seinfeld when I need advice. Jerry was very helpful when I was doing the prime-time show.

Q: Guess the advice wasn't good.

A: Hey, Kelsey Grammer has had half a dozen shows, some that failed, some that didn't. In the end, it was just a failed TV show.

'Battle: LA' conquers box office with $36 million

NEW YORK (AP)—Hollywood would like to skip spring and head straight to summer.

The summer-style blockbuster "Battle: Los Angles" performed like one at the box office, opening to a strong debut of $36 million, according to studio estimates Sunday. The film stars Aaron Eckhart as a veteran soldier leading a platoon of Marines in combat against invading aliens.

For Columbia Pictures and Sony, the sci-fi action film recalls its 2009 Oscar-nominated hit, "District 9." "Battle: Los Angeles" hasn't received nearly as good reviews, but it benefited from a 68 percent male audience and a very successful marketing campaign.

"It's kind of like having a summer film in the spring," said Rory Bruer, president of worldwide distribution at Sony. "From the beginning, this was a film we were excited about."

Bruer added that there's "definitely a connection" between "Battle: Los Angeles" and "District 9," which opened to $37.4 million and was also helmed by a South African filmmaker. Neill Blomkamp directed "District 9," while Jonathan Liebesman directed the similarly handheld-heavy "Battle: Los Angeles."

1. **"Battle: Los Angeles,"** $36 million.
2. **"Rango,"** $23.1 million.
3. **"Red Riding Hood,"** $14.1 million.
4. **"The Adjustment Bureau,"** $11.5 million.
5. **"Mars Needs Moms!"** $6.8 million.
6. **"Hall Pass,"** $5.1 million.
7. **"Beastly,"** $5.1 million
8. **"Just Go With It,"** $4 million.
9. **"The King's Speech,"** $3.6 million.
10. **"Gnomeo & Juliet,"** $3.5 million.

In its second week of release, the animated Western spoof "Rango" came in second, adding $23.1 million for a cumulative total of $68.7 million. The critically acclaimed Paramount Pictures film appeared on its way to surpassing $100 million.

The weekend's other new releases didn't fare as well.

"Red Riding Hood," the updated fairy tale starring Amanda Seyfried and helmed by "Twilight" director Catherine Hardwicke, debuted to $14.1 million for Warner Bros.

Worse was Disney's animated 3-D family film "Mars Needs Moms!" It opened to a disappointing $6.8 million, well below expectations. With a voice cast including Seth Green and Joan Cusack, it also opened on more than 200 IMAX screens.

Based on the book of the same title by Berkeley Breathed, "Mars Needs Moms!" had an estimated production budget of $150 million. Such a poor start means it's likely to be a significant loss for Disney, though that pain is somewhat alleviated by its surprise hit, "Gnomeo & Juliet." It has taken in $89 million in five weeks.

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Battle: Los Angeles
Friday 4:30 7:30 9:55
Saturday 1:30 4:30 7:30 9:55
Sunday 1:30 4:30 7:30
Mon thru Thurs 4:30 7:30
Aaron Eckhart, Michelle Rodriguez
Science Fiction • Rated PG 13
Synopsis
A platoon of Marines take on an alien invasion throughout Los Angeles in this Original Films sci-fi action picture, headed by director Jonathan Liebesman (Texas Chainsaw Massacre: The Beginning) and producer Neal H. Moritz. The Dark Knight's Aaron Eckhart stars in the produciton.

Red Riding Hood
Friday 4:15 7:15 10:00
Saturday 1:15 4:15 7:15 10:00
Sunday 1:15 4:15 7:15
Mon thru Thurs 4:15 7:15
Amanda Sayfried, Gary Oldman
Horror • Rated PG 13

Mars Needs Moms
Friday 4:20 7:20 9:40
Saturday 1:20 4:20 7:20 9:40
Sunday 1:20 4:20 7:20
Mon thru Thurs 4:20 7:20
Seth Green, Joan Cusack
Science Fiction • Rated PG

Rango
Friday 4:00 7:00 9:30
Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:30
Sunday 1:00 4:00 7:00
Mon thru Thurs 4:00 7:00
Johnny Depp, Isla Fisher
Children's/Family • Rated G
Synopsis
Helmer Gore Verbinksi (Pirates of the Caribbean) directs this family-oriented animated adventure starring the voice of Johnny Depp as a family pet who leaves the comfort of home in order to explore the outside world. John Logan (The Aviator) provides the script for the Paramount Pictures production. Abigail Breslin, Isla Fisher, Alfred Molina, Ray Winstone, Harry Dean Stanton, and Ned Beatty provide the voices for the rest of the cast.

The Adjustment Bureau
Friday 4:10 7:10 9:50
Saturday 1:10 4:10 7:10 9:50
Sunday 1:10 4:10 7:10
Mon thru Thurs 4:10 7:10
Matt Damon, Emily Blunt
Science Fiction • Rated PG 13

I Am Number Four
Friday 4:25 7:25 9:35
Saturday 1:25 4:25 7:25 9:35
Sunday 1:25 4:25 7:25
Mon thru Thurs 4:25 7:25
Alex Pettyfer, Timothy Olyphant
Science Fiction • Rated PG 13

Take Me Home Tonight
Friday 7:05
Saturday 1:05 7:05
Sunday 1:05 7:05
Mon thru Thurs 7:05
Ana Faris, Topher Grace
Comedy Drama • Rated R

Unknown
Friday 4:05 9:45
Saturday 4:05 9:45
Sunday 4:05
Mon thru Thurs 4:05
Liam Neeson, Diane Kruger
Thriller • Rated PG 13

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Beckham couple expecting a baby girl

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Team Beckham is adding a girl to its roster.

Soccer great David Beckham and wife Victoria are expecting their fourth child, and a spokesman said Sunday that the couple has learned that it will be a girl.

In January the former England captain announced via Facebook that his wife was due this summer.

The pair, who married in 1999, already has three boys: 11-year-old Brooklyn, eight-year-old Romeo, and five-year-old Cruz.

The 35-year-old Beckham captained England's national team from 2000 to 2006. He played for Manchester United and Real Madrid before joining Major League Soccer club Los Angeles Galaxy in 2007.

Thirty-six-year-old Victoria Beckham found fame as a singer for 1990s girl band the Spice Girls and has since become a fixture of the fashion circuit.

AP

In this Sept, 30, 2009 photo, David Beckham, left, and his wife Victoria arrive at an event to celebrate the launch of the Adidas Originals by Originals David Beckham clothing line designed by James Bond, in Los Angeles.

Charlie Sheen's live shows a fast sellout

NEW YORK (AP)—Charlie Sheen wants you to know the tickets are gone for his pair of live appearances next month.

The outspoken actor has tweeted: "Fastball; Detroit/Chicago sold out in minutes... Thanks to Sheen's Cadre..!"

No details about the show have been disclosed, but it's being billed as "Charlie Sheen Live: My Violent Torpedo of Truth."

Sheen spokesman Larry Solters confirmed Sunday the April 2 and 3 appearances are sold out.

Sheen announced the show last week to his more than 2 million Twitter followers, calling it "the REAL story."

Earlier in the week, the 45-year-old actor was fired from the hit CBS show "Two and a Half Men." He then sued the show's producers for $100 million for breach of contract.

O'Brien attends premiere of post-Tonight Show doc

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—Conan O'Brien attended the premiere Sunday of the documentary that captured the turmoil he faced in the days following his departure from the Tonight Show. But he did it grudgingly.

"I personally have trouble watching it because it's a time in my life that I don't like to go back to," O'Brien said from the red carpet, shortly before the South by Southwest film festival premiere of Conan O'Brien Can't Stop. "I'm happy where I am now. I don't really need to go back to it. But I made a commitment" to director Rodman Flender.

O'Brien allowed camera crews to follow him during the "Legally Prohibited From Being Funny on Television" tour, 32-city music-and-comedy show he embarked on last year following his unceremonious departure as the host of NBC's "Tonight Show."

AP

Conan O'Brien attends the South by Southwest premiere of "Conan O'Brien Can't Stop," a documentary that captured the days after his departure from the "Tonight Show," Sunday, March 13, 2011, Austin, Texas.

It was a tumultuous time for the comedian, who said he didn't sleep much and lost 15 pounds.

"It's a swirly cone of crazy emotions," he said. "It was anxious, depressing but also euphoric and exciting. It was not just one emotion, it was a lot of emotion. I was confused but also really excited by new possibilities and I think you see almost every emotion in the movie. You see pretty much everything."

Flender, the director who has been friends with Conan since they were classmates at Harvard in the 1980s, said he didn't want the film to be a career retrospective or a marketing tool.

"This seemed like Conan in a specific position and how he was going to handle that and it was happening right then and there," Flender said.

Conan has moved on with a new late-night talk show, "Conan" on TBS and says he had had even forgotten that the film was in the works.

"I've put this all behind me and this came along and suddenly Rodman said 'Hey, the film's done' and I said 'what film?" O'Brien said.

Comedian Gallagher released from Minn. hospital

ROCHESTER, Minn. (AP)—Gallagher's manager says the comedian has been released from a Minnesota hospital where he was treated for a minor heart attack.

The 64-year-old Gallagher collapsed in the middle of a show Thursday night at Whiskey Bone's Roadhouse in Rochester.

Manager Craig Marquado says Gallagher was released Sunday morning from St. Marys Hospital, which is part of the Mayo Clinic. He says the comedian was heading home to Los Angeles to see his own doctors. Marquado says Gallagher also suffered a heart attack about 10 years ago.

He says Gallagher should be able to resume performing as soon as he feels up to it.

Gallagher, whose real name is Leo Anthony Gallagher, is best known for smashing watermelons with a sledgehammer.

OBITUARIES

Nilla Pizzi, winner of 1st San Remo song fest dies

ROME (AP)—Nilla Pizzi, an Italian singer whose voice was deemed too sensual for radio during the fascist regime of Benito Mussolini has died. She was 91. Pizzi died on Saturday at a clinic in Milan, where she was convalescing from an earlier operation, the state television said. The Italian President Giorgio Napolitano hailed Pizzi in his condolence message as a sensitive interpreter of Italy's tradition of melodic song. Pizzi triumphed at the 1951 inaugural edition of San Remo, the star-studded festival which promotes Italian song. When she was 90, she sang at San Remo to mark 60 years of the festival and delighted the audience with a still strong and lovely voice. She also won at San Remo the second year, in 1952, sweeping the festival's top three prizes, but finished in second place in 1958, when Domenico Modugno won with "Nel blu dipinto di blu," better known to countless people worldwide as "Volare."

Legendary jazz drummer Joe Morello dies at 82

TRENTON, N.J. (AP)—Legendary jazz drummer Joe Morello, whose virtuosity and command of odd time signatures made him an integral part of the Dave Brubeck Quartet on such classic recordings as "Take Five" and "Blue Rondo a la Turk," has died at age 82. Family members said Morello died Saturday at his home in northern New Jersey. A cause of death was not immediately available. Morello's decision to join Brubeck's quartet in 1956 paved the way for the leader's experiments in unusual rhythms on a series of groundbreaking "Time" albums in the late `50s and early `60s that earned popular and critical acclaim. "Joe was a pioneer in odd time signatures and a vital part of the "Time" series the Quartet made at Columbia Records," said Brubeck. "His drum solo on 'Take Five' is still being heard around the world."

Owsley 'Bear' Stanley dies in Australian car crash

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—Owsley "Bear" Stanley, a 1960s counterculture icon who worked with The Grateful Dead and was a prolific LSD producer, died in a car crash in Australia, his family said Monday. He was 76. Lyrics by The Grateful Dead, Jim Hendricks and Frank Zappa reference Stanley's name and brushes with the law, underlining his influence. Stanley produced an estimated pound (half a kilogram) of pure LSD, or roughly 5 million "trips" of normal potency of the hallucinogenic drug, after enrolling in 1963 at the University of California at Berkeley and becoming involved in the drug scene that underpinned the hippie movement, according to the BookRags.com website. He was an accomplished sound engineer for the psychedelic rock band The Grateful Dead.

Readers offer jealous wife some doggone good advice

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: You advised "Jealous of the Four-Legged Mistress" (Jan. 31) that her husband, "Monty," needs to "put her in a higher rank in the pack," because he pays more attention to "Ginger," the dog, than he does his wife.

My heart ached for Ginger. She's clinging to the one parent she has left and trying to make sure she doesn't lose him, too. Ginger and the other dog are suffering from separation anxiety. If dogs don't have a routine, they have a hard time learning to trust.

If "Jealous" wants to make friends with the dogs, she should take them for a daily 30-minute walk. She may have to walk them separately at first, but once they get used to it, she can walk them together. In addition, she should start feeding them. After a few weeks of this routine, I guarantee Ginger will start paying attention to her new mistress, and after a while, "Jealous" will find herself a permanent object of Ginger's affection.

If some chew toys and closed doors don't improve Monty's attention to his wife's physical needs, THEN it's time to see a marriage counselor.

MAMA OF A RESCUED DOG

DEAR MAMA: Like you, many readers were unwilling to let sleeping dogs lie. They made no bones about offering helpful suggestions. Read on:

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Many of the behaviors "Jealous" described—following her husband around and being first to greet him at the door—are perfectly normal. People keep pets for their devotion and affection, and Ginger is an example of what dogs do that produce rewards for them.

I think the real issue is that the wife is concerned her husband is more affectionate toward Ginger. She shouldn't blame the dog for doing what comes naturally.

ERICA IN SACRAMENTO, CALIF.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Losing his first wife was traumatic not only for Monty, but also for the two dogs. Perhaps Ginger is more bereft over the loss if she was close to his deceased wife. Animals experience loss, too. Instead of feeling threatened, "Jealous" should talk to a professional who can help her learn to gain Ginger's trust, loyalty and affection instead of competing with her. It's possible "Jealous'" physical needs are being neglected because of her attitude.

JAMIE IN RENO, NEV.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Because dogs "love the one they're with," "Jealous" should spend quality time with Ginger. Take her for walks, give her treats and win her over with kindness. As a boarding kennel operator, I deal with clingy dogs all the time. It's my job to make them feel at home and develop a bond with them. Consequently, the pets I take care of love me as much as they do their owners.

"Jealous" sounds very insecure. She needs to learn a little about canines to understand that Ginger's behavior is acceptable.

DOG LADY IN MICHIGAN

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I, too, had to race to the door to be the first to get my ex-husband's attention. I never won. That vindictive mutt wet only on my side of the bed. It grabbed the pot roast from the counter and hid under the bed, and when I reached under to take it back, it bit me! When I screamed in pain, the one who was supposed to love me best yelled, "Don't hurt the dog!"

I am now happily married to an angel of a man who puts me first. No woman needs to take second place to a dog.

MOTHER OF EIGHT IN UTAH

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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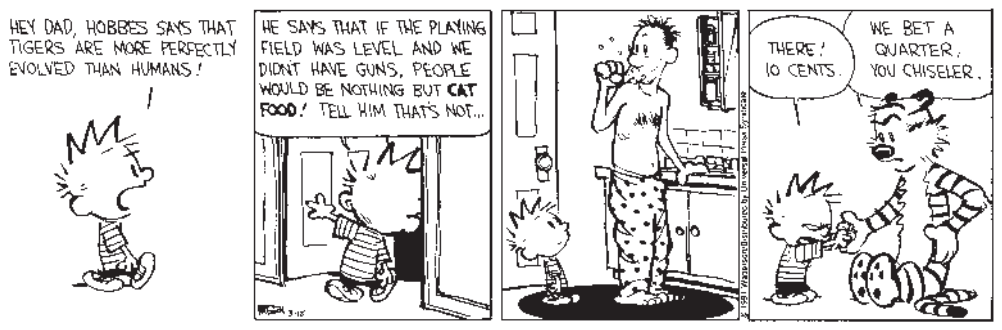
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


HEY DAD, HOBBES SAYS THAT TIGERS ARE MORE PERFECTLY EVOLVED THAN HUMANS!
HE SAYS THAT IF THE PLAYING FIELD WAS LEVEL AND WE DIDN'T HAVE GUNS, PEOPLE WOULD BE NOTHING BUT CAT FOOD! TELL HIM THAT'S NOT...
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WE COULD STILL GO TO CHICAGO, EVEN THOUGH WE DON'T HAVE OPRAH TICKETS.
SURE WE COULD.
MAYBE A LITTLE WRIGLEY FIELD TO SEE THE CUBS?
SOUNDS FUN. I LOVE TO SEE SPORTS PLAYED AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL.
IN THAT CASE, I'LL SEE IF I CAN GET BULLS TICKETS.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Mideast gulf
5 Coasted
9 — Na Na
12 Son of Jacob and Leah
13 Top-rated
14 Glutton
15 2010 ballet movie
17 "— Town"
18 Smooch
19 "Turandot," e.g.
21 Wan
24 Impale
25 String instrument
26 Urged
30 Mess up
31 19-Across solos
32 Atmosphere
33 Fidgety
35 Farm fraction
36 Historic times
37 Distorted
38 "— on a true story"
40 Johann Sebastian —
42 "Yecch!"
43 Topic that's over and done with
48 Pair
49 Grooving on
50 Autumn tool
51 Witness
52 Untouchable Eliot
53 Kuwaiti leader

DOWN
1 Priestly vestment
2 Atl. state
3 Gabor or Peron
4 Jefferson's on it
5 Lip
6 Depressions
7 — pickle
8 Means
9 One who gives you a shine
10 Day portion
11 Taj Mahal city
16 Relatives
20 Chum
21 State
22 Beget
23 Good luck symbol
24 Hot tubs
26 Enrages
27 Wrong (Pref.)
28 Limerick's land
29 Sketched
31 Genie's friend
34 Uno, due, —
35 On the beach
37 Interlaken interjection
38 Unopened flowers
39 Chills and fever
40 Belfry fliers
41 Commotions
44 Away from WSW
45 Aries
46 Tackle moguls
47 Always, in verse

Solution time: 21 mins.

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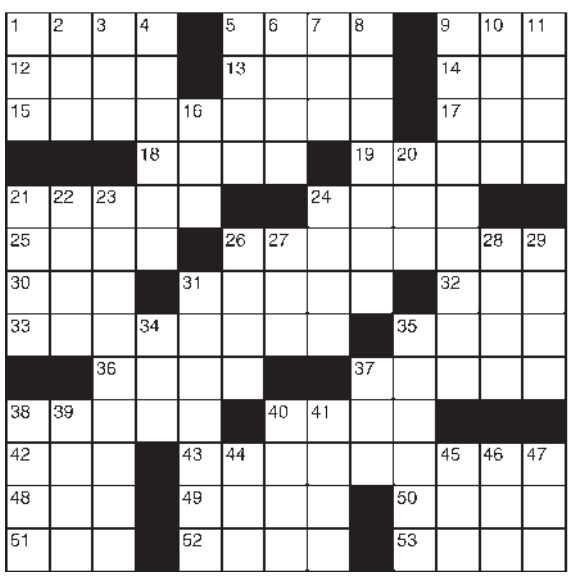
Yesterday's answer 3-15



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CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kellan Lutz, 26; will.i.am, 36; Eva Longoria, 36; Bret Michaels, 48

Happy Birthday: Being a participant will make a difference this year. Much can be achieved if you work in unison with others. Your ability to adapt to the changes going on around you and make split-second decisions will be what allows you to surpass the expectations of yourself and others. Your numbers are 7, 11, 16, 21, 24, 32, 43

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Keep tabs on what others are doing before you make your move. Don't let any uncertainty show or you may be coerced into using someone else's means and methods when ideally you want to put your own ideas and plans into play. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): You cannot leave anything to chance when it comes to your home and family. Don't allow anyone to take advantage of you when dealing with institutions, government agencies or large corporations. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): The changes you make now will benefit you for some time to come. Talk over your plans with someone you feel can contribute and you will get the support you need to move forward. A good partnership can be formed, personally and professionally. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Controlling your emotions will be necessary if you want to get ahead in business. The stability and confidence you build into the work connections you make today will help you secure future jobs or a higher income. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You are on the right track, so don't look back or stop now. Keep the momentum flowing and you will secure the position you want and the support of the people you are dealing with today. Travel if hands on help will make a difference. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Money appears to be within reach. Whether it comes to you through an investment, contract, settlement or even a gift or windfall, be ready to take advantage of the circumstances surrounding your good fortune. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Call the shots and you won't be sorry. Do whatever you can to show people what you have to offer and you will advance. Love is in the stars, so plan a celebration for the evening hours. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Don't let your emotions take over. Keep your vulnerable side a secret and let others reveal what they are planning to do first. Once you feel confident that you can incorporate what you have to offer into the plans, you can divulge your intentions. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): You can set a small business up from home that will help to subsidize your income. Don't let anger slow you down when there is so much to do. Not everyone will agree with what you are doing but, as long as you feel comfortable with your plans, you must forge ahead. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Someone you need in your corner personally will be emotional about the way things are going between you and a friend, neighbor or relative. You will have to reassure whomever you are responsible for that you have a viable plan so that you can move ahead. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): What you do for a living has to take priority today if you want to stay on top of your finances. The way you express your plans or desires will make a difference to the outcome. Charm and diplomacy will be a must. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Mix business with pleasure and you will make the most of your day. Someone may suggest changes that you question at first. A couple of alterations are likely to bring greater benefits. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You have an extraordinary way of expressing yourself. You are strong-willed and charming.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	9		6		7			
	5	4		1			9	3
			3				7	
6						4		5
	3						2	
2		7						9
	2				1			
3	8			9		2	1	
			4		6		5	

Difficulty Level ★★ 3/15

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

2	8	6	5	9	3	4	1	7
9	4	5	7	1	8	2	6	3
3	7	1	4	6	2	9	8	5
4	2	3	8	5	6	1	7	9
7	6	9	1	3	4	5	2	8
1	5	8	9	2	7	3	4	6
8	9	4	2	7	5	6	3	1
5	3	7	6	4	1	8	9	2
6	1	2	3	8	9	7	5	4

Difficulty Level ★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

SUZANNE SOMERS WRITES BOOKS **Solution: 7 letters**

Y	S	C	E	F	I	L	E	M	A	H	Y	M	S	A
N	T	T	H	T	W	L	S	U	O	R	O	M	U	H
T	G	U	A	H	O	E	R	K	T	D	A	T	C	E
F	E	I	A	R	N	S	O	E	E	H	O	O	C	A
R	R	E	S	E	S	O	O	L	O	B	M	R	E	L
E	E	A	W	E	B	P	I	N	I	E	E	G	S	T
M	N	A	N	S	D	N	E	O	D	N	R	A	S	H
R	O	T	D	C	G	Y	G	Y	R	E	S	N	F	T
O	I	I	I	O	I	R	S	U	V	E	N	I	U	E
F	S	N	E	M	A	S	T	I	N	S	O	C	L	B
R	S	O	T	P	M	R	E	S	D	B	I	I	Ⓒ	A
E	A	C	H	A	E	W	E	N	E	R	R	S	Ⓘ	Z
P	P	I	R	N	A	C	I	R	E	M	A	U	Ⓗ	I
Y	E	I	D	Y	R	L	E	W	E	J	M	M	Ⓒ	L
S	E	S	P	O	K	E	S	W	O	M	A	N	A	E

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American, Autobiographies, Beauty, Book, Bruce, Chic, Comedy, Design, Diet, Drama, Elizabeth, Fitness, Francis, Hamel, Health, Humorous, Icon, Jewelry, Life, Mahoney, Marie, Marion, Modeling, Music, Organic, Passion, Performer, Poetry, Read, Renew, Review, Sell, Sense, Snow, Spokeswoman, Star, Successful, Sweet, Three's Company, Trends, Turner

Yesterday's Answer: Thoughts

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Big East gives new-look tournament a familiar feel

By EDDIE PELLS
AP NATIONAL WRITER

Three more teams in this year's edition of March Madness. Three more networks to cover it.

And the Big East will have its hooks in practically every nook and cranny of that new-look NCAA bracket.

The NCAA selection committee released its newfangled, 68-team draw Sunday and included a whopping 11 teams from the deepest conference in the nation.

Leading the way for the Big East was Pittsburgh, seeded first in the Southeast even though it didn't win a game in the conference's postseason tournament.

"It has Hall of Fame coaches, great programs with storied traditions and heritage," St. John's coach Steve Lavin said, a few minutes before his team became the 11th and final squad from the Big East to have its name announced on the selection show. "It has athletic programs that understand the value of investing the dollars that are needed to run a topflight program."

All 68 teams in the NCAA tournament are aiming for one destination—the Final Four in Houston, set for April 2. At the Las Vegas Hilton, Ohio State was made an early 7-2 favorite to cut down the nets at Reliant Stadium after the title game on April 4.

The Buckeyes (32-2) of the Big Ten were the top seed overall, with Kansas (32-2) of the Big 12 next, while defending champion Duke aced out another Big East team, Notre Dame, for the fourth and final top seed. Led by one of the country's best guards, Nolan Smith, the Blue Devils (30-4) are trying to become the first team since Florida in 2006-07 to repeat as national champions.

The tournament got a facelift this year, including the addition of three more at-large teams that will open the tournament in what the NCAA is calling the "First Four." Those games—UAB (22-9) vs. Clemson (21-11) and Southern Cal (19-14) vs. Virginia Commonwealth (23-11)—will take place Tuesday and Wednesday.

Those, along with every other game of the entire tournament, will be aired in their entirety on four networks. Before the start of the season, TBS, TNT and TruTV joined CBS in signing a new, 14-year TV contract worth $10.8 billion—the price to be paid to air the games that make up the ingredients for America's biggest office pool. The games used to all be shown on CBS, with the network deciding which part of the country got which games. Now, it's the viewers who will make the choice.

But more teams, more TV and more money don't solve every problem or erase every whiff of controversy.

As is always the case on Selection Sunday, there were plenty of head-scratchers—a list of teams that came out of nowhere to make it and other virtual shoo-ins that didn't.

In the first category: Georgia (21-11), given a surprisingly high No. 10 seed despite losing twice to Alabama, a team that got left out. Many experts thought VCU, UAB and Clemson making the tournament at all were equally big surprises.

Among those snubbed were Virginia Tech (21-11), which has come close but missed for four straight years, and Colorado (21-13), which beat tournament teams Texas and Missouri once—and another one, Kansas State, three times.

"I was shocked," Colorado coach Tad Boyle said. "That's the only word that comes to my mind. Just absolutely shocked we weren't in the field."

Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith, who led the selection committee, said members investigated the resumes of the teams "more than I've ever done in my tenure on this committee."

"Colorado is a good ballclub, and there were many good ballclubs we considered," he said. "They just didn't quite get the votes to get in. That's just the reality."

Those that did make it include nearly three-quarters of the Big East—11 of 16 teams from a conference that was formed in 1979 and gets credit for helping transform college basketball from something much smaller into a sport that produces the best single American sporting event this side of the Super Bowl.

Pitt (27-5) got the top seed in the Southeast—its second No. 1 in the last three years—despite losing to Connecticut in the quarterfinals of the conference tournament. Notre Dame (26-6) was given a No. 2 seed in the Southwest after losing to Louisville in the semifinals. And Connecticut (26-9) got handsomely rewarded for winning five straight games against that tough competition to win the tournament. The Huskies, who missed the NCAAs altogether last year, are a No. 3 seed in the West and will open Thursday against No. 14 Bucknell.

"We were a good team in the league, but to be a No. 3 seed ... obviously our work this past week really paid off," UConn coach Jim Calhoun said.

The Big Ten placed seven teams, including a pair—Penn State and Michigan State—with 14 losses each. Led by freshman big man Jared Sullinger, Ohio State got rewarded with opening-week games down the road in Cleveland. The Buckeyes open against the winner between Texas-San Antonio and Alabama State, a pair of 16th-seeded teams that will also play in the First Four early in the week.

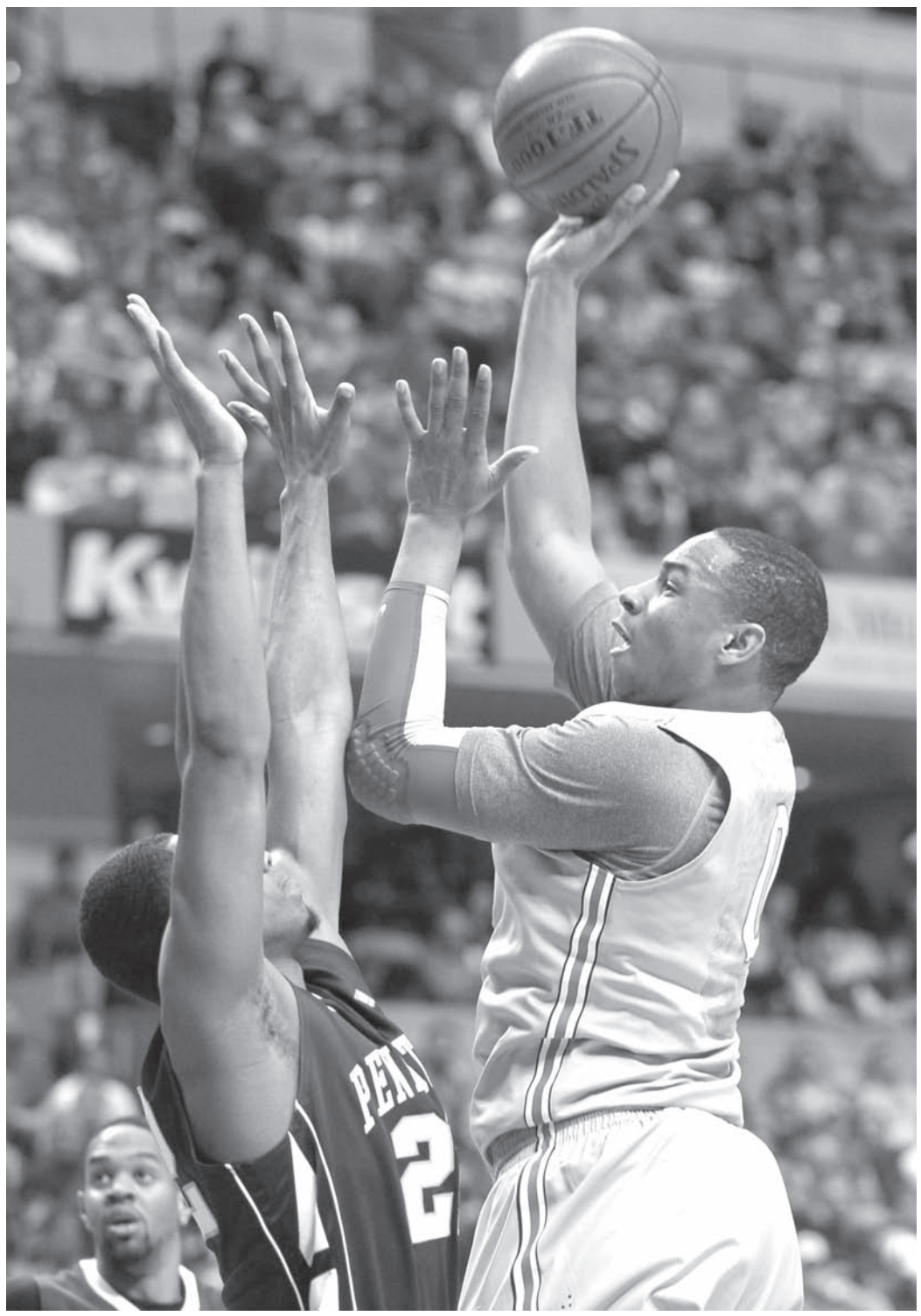
"There's a lot of great teams, a lot of great players in our conference," Buckeyes guard Jon Diebler said. "It's just unbelievable the amount of talent here, and I think the Big Ten should have a good showing in the tournament."

The Big 12 and Southeastern Conference got five teams each while the Atlantic Coast only got four—a list that included the usuals, Duke and North Carolina, along with Florida State and Clemson, but not Boston College, which finished 20-12.

"I'll put our top two against anybody. I'll put our middle pack against anybody else's middle pack," BC coach Steve Donahue said. "But, yet, there's 11 from one league and 3 1/2, basically, from another. I don't see the drastic difference. I'm being honest."

Of the 37 at-large teams, 30 came from the top six conferences and seven came from the so-called mid-majors—the conferences that supply the underdogs and unknowns that have turned the NCAA tournament into what it is. The seven were one fewer than last year, even though there were three more spots available.

"It was more difficult, it really was, because there was so many good teams out there," Smith said of the selection process.



AP

Ohio State forward Jared Sullinger, right, shoots over Penn State guard Taran Buie in the first half of an NCAA college basketball game in the championship of the Big Ten Conference tournament in Indianapolis, Sunday, March 13, 2011.

Magic end long drought in Phoenix with 111-88 rout

PHOENIX (AP)—Dwight Howard had 26 points and 15 rebounds, then watched the fourth quarter from the bench as the Orlando Magic completed a 111-88 rout of the Suns on Sunday for their first victory in Phoenix in nine seasons.

Phoenix had been the only NBA city where Howard had not won.

Aaron Brooks, starting in place of injured Steve Nash, had 19 points and 10 assists, but the Suns were blown out at home for the second game in a row.

Six other Magic players reached double figures, led by Brandon Bass with 17 and Gilbert Arenas with 16. Orlando's regulars got plenty of rest heading into Monday night's game against the Lakers in Los Angeles.

Nash missed the game with "pelvic instability." Coach Alvin Gentry said his star point guard probably also will miss Monday night's game at Houston.

Celtics 87, Bucks 56

In Boston, Ray Allen scored 17 points in just three quarters and Boston set a franchise record for fewest points allowed in the shot clock era.

It was the lowest score against the Celtics since they beat the Milwaukee Hawks 62-57 on Feb. 27, 1955.

Earl Barron was the only player to score in double figures for the Bucks, finishing with 10 points. Australian Andrew Bogut and Brandon Jennings led Milwaukee's starters with eight points apiece.

Thunder 95, Cavaliers 75

In Cleveland, Russell Westbrook scored 12 straight points during a 5-minute stretch of the third quarter to awaken his listless Oklahoma City teammates.

Westbrook scored 14 of his 20 points in the third, helping the Thunder open a 20-point cushion. Kevin Durant, the NBA's leading scorer, added 19 points—nine below his average—as the Thunder improved to 19-6 against Eastern Conference teams.

Daniel Gibson had 13 points and J.J. Hickson pulled down 15 rebounds for Cleveland.

Bobcats 95, Raptors 90

In Toronto, D.J. Augustin scored 23 points and Gerald Henderson had 18 to help Charlotte snap a five-game road losing streak.

Stephen Jackson and Boris Diaw added 15 points apiece for the Bobcats, who have won two straight after a season-high six-game slide.

Andrea Bargnani had 17 points and Leandro Barbosa added 15 for Toronto, which has lost 11 of 15 and 24 of 29.

Pacers 106, Knicks 93

In New York, Tyler Hansbrough scored a career-high 29 points, Dahntay Jones added 18 in place of leading scorer Danny Granger, and Indiana snapped a six-game losing streak.

Darren Collison added 16 points, and Roy Hibbert had 12 points, eight rebounds and five blocks for the Pacers in the opener of a home-and-home series.

Amare Stoudemire scored 28 points for the Knicks, who lost their second straight. Carmelo Anthony added 25 but shot just 9 for 22.

Warriors 100, Timberwolves 77

In Oakland, California, Stephen Curry had 24 points and nine rebounds, and Golden State ended Kevin Love's consecutive double-doubles streak at 53 games.

Monta Ellis and Dorell Wright added 16 points apiece for the Warriors, who limited Love to only six points on 1-of-6 shooting, ending the NBA's longest such streak since Elvin Hayes had double-doubles in 55 consecutive games in 1973-74. Love had 12 rebounds.

Michael Beasley and Martell Webster each had 16 points for Minnesota.

Nick Watney comes up big to win at Doral

DORAL, Fla. (AP)—Nick Watney had every reason to see nothing but trouble as he stood on the 18th tee at Doral, a tough tee shot in any circumstance, let alone with a World Golf Championship on the line.

History was hardly on his side Sunday at the Cadillac Championship.

Two years ago, he lost a duel against Phil Mickelson by one turn of the ball on his final putt. Only the day before, Watney lost focus and pulled his tee shot into the water to make double bogey and fall out of the lead.

Presented yet another chance, Watney seized it.

He belted his tee shot down the middle, fired an 8-iron over the corner of the lake and sank a 12-foot birdie putt for a two-shot victory over Dustin Johnson.

"I wasn't nervous," Watney said. "I really wanted to take care of business and to grasp this opportunity. I actually love that feeling; you don't get it too often. But I really love to be ... yeah, I guess I was a little nervous.

"But it's fun," he said when the laughter subsided. "That's why you play. I'm thinking, 'I have to be in this moment—right now—because this is all that counts.'"

He made it pay off with the biggest win of his career, one that puts him in the conversation of top American golfers.

Watney closed with a 5-under 67 with a birdie he felt was important, especially with Johnson behind him in the 18th fairway after a big drive of his own. Johnson hit a 9-iron that covered the flag and settled 8 feet away. Typical of his final round, he missed it and shot 71.

"I did everything I wanted to do, and just couldn't get it in the hole," Johnson said.

Butch Harmon is the swing coach for both of them, and he got choked up when he hugged Watney after his press conference. Harmon started working with Watney when he was a raw talent at Fresno State, hardly one of the elite in the game at the time.

AP

Nick Watney poses with the trophy after winning during the Cadillac Championship golf tournament in Doral, Fla. Sunday, March 13, 2011.

Few players have such a pleasant disposition, so much that Watney's college buddies called him "Rube" after the character in "Major League II" because he was so polite to the seniors. Against Johnson and the rest of a world-class field, Watney showed no mercy.

"Top-10 finishes are nice," Watney said. "But winning is what counts out here, and that's how you're measured. To win this tournament against this field, it's a huge honor. I'm very excited. I'm very proud."

Francesco Molinari, who won the last World Golf Championship in stroke play last November in Shanghai, closed with a 69 and tied for third with Anders Hansen (67), who will move into the top 50 and now has to stay there the next two weeks to get into the Masters.

Tiger Woods matched his best score of the year with a 6-under 66, and when Rory McIlroy dunked his tee shot into the water on the 18th hole and made bogey, that enabled Woods to tie for 10th.

It was his first top 10 in an official PGA Tour event in nine months, dating to the U.S. Open.

"I want to win golf tournaments ... and I didn't do that this week," Woods said. "But I showed positive signs for the next time I play, which is a good thing."

Watney finished at 16-under 272 and earned $1.4 million, moving him closer to cracking the top 10 in the world ranking.

"All I can do is try to keep improving, hopefully keep winning tournaments," said Watney, who has yet to finish out of the top 10 this year. "The world rankings are what they are. But that's not why I play. I play for feelings like this."

Johnson opened with a birdie and went 12 straight pars before his next one, a fairway bunker shot that hit the flag and settled 2 feet away on the 14th. But he came undone on the 16th, going bunker-to-bunker for a bogey at the worst time.

"Nothing went in the hole all day," he said. "The 18th hole kind of sums it up."

That wasn't the case for Watney.

He opened with back-to-back birdies and took the outright lead with a birdie on the par-5 10th.

But he won this tournament with pars.

On the tough par-3 13th, Watney went well right into a bunker and blasted out weakly to 18 feet. Right when it looked as though he would drop a shot, he holed the par putt to keep his one-shot lead. On the next par-3, Watney went long into a bunker and faced a downhill shot. He was so careful that it barely crawled onto the fringe. He drained that one from 25 feet for par to stay tied.

"I feel like that's what happens when you win a golf tournament. You make some putts that you really need to," Watney said.

Johnson missed an 18-foot birdie putt on the 17th that would have tied Watney, and he figured his last chance was a birdie on the 18th, the toughest at Doral where only two players had made birdie in the final round.

Johnson was in the fairway after a 326-yard tee shot when he watched Watney make the putt.

"I kind of wanted to make him hole in order to tie," Watney said. "It worked out great. After yesterday, I couldn't have asked for a better ending."

It wasn't a bitter ending for Johnson. He spends a lot of time with Watney, sometimes in Las Vegas while working with Harmon, sometimes in practice rounds in some high-stake games.

"Nick is a good friend of mine," Johnson said. "I told him walking off that if I was going to lose to somebody, I was glad it was him. And he played really well. I didn't give him the tournament. He earned it. He played well."

'There will be a season.' You sure?

NEW YORK (AP)—There will be an NFL season in 2011.

That's what Commissioner Roger Goodell keeps saying. So do many of the owners and lots of players, even though labor talks collapsed, the union dissolved itself, and star players including MVP Tom Brady asked for a preliminary injunction to prevent a lockout hours before the league even implemented one.

Despite the nasty rhetoric of last week, no one would paint the doomsday scenario of no football come September. Instead, we hear Chargers president Dean Spanos say, "We will get through this. There will be a new agreement and we're looking forward to playing football this season."

And we hear Bears president Ted Phillips echo with "A deal will get done and we expect to play football in 2011."

Are they right? And how will they get there?

"There will be no negotiating for a while," said Gary Roberts, dean of the Indiana University School of Law in Indianapolis. "Both sides will wait to see how the legal maneuvering plays out.

"Where we are after all the mediated negotiations is the players reached a point where they figure they can get a better deal if they file an antitrust lawsuit than continue to bargain at the table. The league would have preferred to be in collective bargaining and lock the players out because they feel it's the best way to maximize their leverage.

"Ultimately, come August and September, they feel they will have more leverage to get a better deal."

August? September? Not very encouraging.

"This is classic collective bargaining, with each side using their tactical devices to increase bargaining leverage. At the end of this, before the season is lost, they will hammer out an agreement."

For now, the players will meet in Marco Island, Fla., beginning Wednesday, an annual convention that has taken place in Maui most years—that's where DeMaurice Smith was elected successor to the late Gene Upshaw as executive director in 2009. Smith was charged with keeping the status quo as much as possible because the players liked the deal Upshaw and then-Commissioner Paul Tagliabue struck in 2006.

They will plot strategy for the next few months, hopeful the request for a preliminary injunction filed Friday by Brady, Peyton Manning, Drew Brees and seven other players, including Texas A&M linebacker Von Miller, will stop the lockout. The players also filed an antitrust suit against the league.

Should the injunction be granted, the NFL would be forced to operate while a new CBA is discussed, although the rules under which the league would be doing business are uncertain. When the players' strike failed in 1987 and the union decertified in 1989, the situation was similar. And the players' success in the courts eventually led to a new labor pact in 1993 that included free agency.

Decertification means players no longer are protected under labor law but instead are now allowed to take their chances in federal court under antitrust law.

Most importantly from the end of the strike—and the end of the replacement games the NFL staged while the union was on picket lines—until the new agreement was reached, no games were missed.

"As a veteran and lifetime fan of professional football, I have experienced the business with uncertainty firsthand," said Seattle running back/kick returner Leon Washington, who agreed to a new four-year contract two weeks ago. "I feel for the coaches, and facility and stadium employees as their lives could be affected. ... With all this being said, I'm optimistic that there will be football played in 2011."

The owners begin their usual planning for the next season with their annual meetings in New Orleans starting next Sunday. Not that anything is normal about this offseason.

Still, they will hear from the competition committee, which has been meeting on potential rules changes, and will get reports from a variety of other committees. That includes the labor committee that failed to reach agreement with the players.

And the owners also will plot strategy, knowing very well that corporate and broadcast partners and sponsors already are making plans for their late summer and fall spending.

For the next few weeks, fans can get their fill with the NFL draft, a cottage industry unto itself. While fans focus on pro days and workouts for college players headed into the April 28-30 draft, the business side of the game will hunker down in U.S. District Court in Minneapolis, where Brady and his peers brought their lawsuit.

After that, barring court decisions that force some movement, it will be time to get nervous, if not panicky.

"We definitely will not see a deal reached before seeing some of these rulings from the courts," Roberts said. "Neither sides know what their risks are until the court rules.

"As for when the parties begin to feel the heat sufficiently to do a deal, we can't predict. Again, my guess is won't see a deal done before August or September."

Busy Pacquiao starts buildup for Mosley

BOXING

MANILA, Philippines—Manny Pacquiao started getting into shape yesterday and, as part of the hard grind ahead, reluctantly agreed to do away with the long locks that may interfere with his training.

After playing basketball in Gen. Santos City, Pacquiao realized that the loose hair strands interfered with his vision and went to his personal barber.

The pound-for-pound king later did stretching exercises and jogged for 20 minutes to build up his stamina for the rigorous eight-week preparations for his May 7 showdown with Shane Mosley in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Buddy and trainer Buboy Fernandez coaxed Pacquiao to start a training regimen charted by chief trainer Freddie Roach.

Pacquiao

The five-time Trainer of the Year will be arriving from Los Angeles on Tuesday, bringing along super welterweight Shawn Porter and super lightweight David Rodela as Pacquiao's initial sparring partners.

Briton Amir Khan, the World Boxing Association light welter champion, is also coming to work out with the eight-division world champion in the training camp set in Baguio City.

Khan also trains under Roach.

"Road work and conditioning [first]," Fernandez told the *Inquirer* over the phone yesterday. "He (Pacquiao) had a long layoff and needs to build up his stamina."

Pacquiao last fought on Nov. 13, when he dominated Mexican Antonio Margarito to claim the World Boxing Council 154-pound crown.

"He looks fine," said Fernandez, who estimates Pacquiao's current weight at between 155 and 158 lb. "We don't need to rush things as he may become too light too soon."

After spending four weeks in Baguio, Pacquiao will proceed to Roach's Wild Card Gym in Hollywood on April 2 for the final phase of his training. ***(Inquirer)***

AKIMARU-LED

From Page 28

Akimaru swam the two-lap race faster than six-time XTERRA Saipan winner Renata Bucher (21:39), 2011 XTERRA Saipan women's champion Shonny Vanlandingham (22:28), Japanese pro Takahiro Ogasawara (22:44), Austrian pro Carina Wasle (23:02), and seven other pros.

With Akimaru finishing in the Top 5 in the swim leg, his team enjoyed more than a five-minute lead over Joshua Berger and Jackie Van Dam. Joshua Berger submitted 28:30 in the swim leg.

Akimaru's squad padded its lead in the bike leg after Carey completed the 30-km race up to Mt. Tapochao and along the trails in Navy Hill in 2:12:35, the fastest in the relay event. Carey's time in the bike was the 25th best among 60 riders.

Then Oshima-Berger completed their team's domination of the relay race after recording the best time (team event) in the 12-km trail run with her 1:06:38. She also tallied the sixth best overall time in the run leg and was the fastest Saipan runner. The pros occupied the first five slots in the run race with Wasle completing the event in 55:23.

Oshima-Berger beat the team of her husband, Joshua, and Van Dam, who totaled 4:18:09 to settle for second place in the mixed event. Van Dam did both the bike and run legs of the race and still finished the race despite a couple of crashes, timing in at 2:35:36 and 1:10:25.

Australia's Julia Lendavi and Saipan's Ricardo Antonio took third place honors with a time of 4:39:03. Lendavi was the swimmer and runner on the team and posted 29:04 and 140:40, respectively, while Antonio logged 2:27:52 in the bike race.

In the men's team division, Paul Anthony and Cesar Fortaleza had the fastest time and second overall in the relay at 3:52:37. Anthony finished the swim leg in 26:34 and tallied 1:10:25 in the run race, while Fortaleza negotiated the bike course in 2:14:18.

Another two-man team—Jeff Taylor and Joel Tudela—placed second in the men's division with a combined time of 4:44:54. Taylor finished the swim in 26:18, while Tudela recorded 2:36:37 and 1:38:51 in the bike and run legs.

The trio of swimmer Daniel Calvo (37:59), biker Rommel Tiosejo (3:03:47), and runner Darin Keizer (1:112:49) came in at third with a combined time of 4:55:38, while the team of Vincent Seman (26:32), Jay Santos (2:55:58), and David Banes (1:47:00) logged 5:11:08 for fourth place.

FLY HIGH

From Page 28

yo, and Damart Teregeyo.

The team started the tourney by winning its first four games before topping How I Set Your Mother in the finals.

How I Set Your Mother actually took an early 4-3 lead, but began to lag after both teams became knotted at 7-all. From there Fly High jumped ahead, 18-10, and held on for the victory, 21-14. Honorable mention goes out to U17's Serves You Right, who finished third place.

In the seven-player U14 division, runner-up Boom-Boom-Pow defeated Unknown, 21-19, in the first finals match to force a tiebreaker set for all the marbles, but Unknown recovered and took the top prize, 15-10, in the clutch.

Team Unknown consists of Jehn Joyner, Tommy Choi, Andrew Johnson, Kaisei Toda, and Seoung Hyun Lee. It is coached by Beth Johnson and Russ Quinn.

Girly Girls rounded out the third spot after falling to Boom-Boom-Pow, 13-15, in the U14 semifinals.

The rest of the division was made up of fourth-ranked All-Stars, fifth place Mam-Sir, We Will Block You, and Up And Coming.

The Top 3 finishers in each division were awarded medals and various prize packages provided by sponsors Mikasa, Docomo Pacific, Hollywood Theaters, and Big Dipper Ice Cream.

Prizes included volleyballs, Smile Marianas T-shirts, cellular phones, ice cream coupons, movie passes, as well as gift cards from National Office Supply and Java Joe's.

Northern Marianas Islands Volleyball Association organized the event. Visit www.nmivolleyball.org for more details and photos.

YOUTH

From Page 28

Litulumar and Alvarez squared off inside the octagon but with no clear winner after their match, judges decided to call it a draw.

Trench Tech Shane "Pikaboo" Alvarez, meanwhile, had his hand raised over Zalaka's Ben "Out of Gas" Duenas in their lightweight bout.

Alvarez won via referee stoppage due to strikes at 4:58 of the first round. Duenas gave up his back as the fighters wrestled on the ground, which allowed Alvarez to mount him from that position.

Alvarez rained down a series of hammer strikes until the referee stepped in and called it off; Alvarez is still undefeated in five fights.

Marianas Elite welterweight Vince Pua, for his part, tapped out independent fighter Juan Ogarto with a rear-naked choke submission at 1:30 into the first round.

In other matches, Counter Shot Guam's featherweight Eric Aguon won his MMA debut over Marianas Elite's Josh Cruz (1-3) at the two-minute mark of the second round via referee stoppage due to strikes from the mount.

Featherweight A.J. "Tayo" Mettao of Marianas Delete also knocked out Trench Tech's Josh "Chaos" Duenas just 26 seconds into the first round of their match.

Counter Shot Guam bantamweight Leandro Dalalo, meantime, defeated Roman Cabrera at the two-minute mark of the second round via referee stoppage due to strikes from the mount.

Joy "2Legit" Fred knocked out Danny "The Warrior" Santos via doctor's stoppage after Round 1 due to excessive bleeding from Santos' nose because of strikes in their lightweight match.

Trench Tech featherweight Tavita Lueta won his K-1 Kickboxing match over Zalaka's Ton Villagomez via verbal submission after the first round; Villagomez did not answer the bell at the start of Round 2.

Two other Trench Tech fighters won their matches Friday with Juan Lansangan defeating Zalaka's Joe Aldan in their lightweight bout after the latter could not answer the second round bell due to exhaustion.

Trench Tech super heavyweight Mylo "Alabama" Lassiter (2-0) also pummeled independent fighter Lino Repeki to win his second MMA fight, again in under a minute. Lassiter received the TKO verdict 59 seconds into the first round via referee stoppage due to punches.

Trench Tech Promotions would like to thank sponsors Budget Rent-A-Car, Department of Public Health, Docomo Pacific, Centruy Hotel, Konflikt MMA, Hagu Next, Miller Lite Island Flavor, Monster, and Pepsi for making Rites of Passage 10 possible.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Boston	47	17	.734	–
New York	34	31	.523	13 1/2
Philadelphia	34	32	.515	14
New Jersey	21	43	.328	26
Toronto	18	48	.273	30

Southeast Division

x-Miami	45	21	.682	–
Orlando	42	25	.627	3 1/2
Atlanta	38	28	.576	7
Charlotte	28	38	.424	17
Washington	16	48	.250	28

Central Division

y-Chicago	47	18	.723	–
Indiana	28	38	.424	19 1/2
Milwaukee	26	39	.400	21
Detroit	23	44	.343	25
Cleveland	12	53	.185	35

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

x-San Antonio	54	12	.818	–
Dallas	47	19	.712	7
New Orleans	39	29	.574	16
Memphis	36	31	.537	18 1/2
Houston	33	34	.493	21 1/2

Northwest Division

Oklahoma City	42	23	.646	–
Denver	39	27	.591	3 1/2
Portland	37	29	.561	5 1/2
Utah	34	33	.507	9
Minnesota	17	51	.250	26 1/2

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	47	20	.701	–
Phoenix	33	31	.516	12 1/2
Golden State	30	36	.455	16 1/2
L.A. Clippers	26	41	.388	21
Sacramento	15	49	.234	30 1/2

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division

Yesterday's Games

Oklahoma City 95, Cleveland 75
Charlotte 95, Toronto 90
Orlando 111, Phoenix 88
Boston 87, Milwaukee 56
Indiana 106, New York 93
Golden State 100, Minnesota 77

NBA LEADERS

SCORING

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Durant, OKC	61	563	471	1707	28.0
Stoudemire, NYK	64	640	402	1692	26.4
James, MIA	64	593	414	1678	26.2
Wade, MIA	62	568	395	1583	25.5
Anthony, NYK	61	536	411	1540	25.2
Bryant, LAL	67	600	382	1673	25.0
Ellis, GOL	66	619	294	1642	24.9
Rose, CHI	64	569	343	1581	24.7
Nowitzki, DAL	57	476	305	1315	23.1
Howard, ORL	64	517	431	1465	22.9
Martin, HOU	65	431	482	1484	22.8
Griffin, LAC	67	565	374	1511	22.6
Aldridge, POR	66	578	309	1469	22.3
Westbrook, OKC	65	497	427	1446	22.2
Bargnani, TOR	58	474	247	1262	21.8
Williams, NJN	58	396	321	1208	20.8
Love, MIN	68	457	404	1405	20.7
Granger, IND	64	438	315	1318	20.6
Randolph, MEM	62	495	251	1247	20.1
Lopez, NJN	64	483	311	1277	20.0

FG PERCENTAGE

	FG	FGA	PCT
Hilario, DEN	338	536	.631
Howard, ORL	517	868	.596
A. Johnson, TOR	258	449	.575
Horford, ATL	422	747	.565
Ibaka, OKC	251	458	.548
Young, PHL	353	647	.546
Odom, LAL	382	711	.537
Humphries, NJN	253	473	.535
Millsap, UTA	427	808	.528
Nowitzki, DAL	476	902	.528

REBOUNDS

	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Love, MIN	68	314	755	1069	15.7
Howard, ORL	64	255	642	897	14.0
Randolph, MEM	62	284	507	791	12.8
Griffin, LAC	67	236	587	823	12.3
Gasol, LAL	67	224	465	689	10.3
Humphries, NJN	64	178	455	633	9.9
Horford, ATL	61	159	441	600	9.8
Lee, GOL	57	167	381	548	9.6
Chandler, DAL	60	166	397	563	9.4
Jefferson, UTA	67	186	441	627	9.4

ASSISTS

	G	AST	AVG
Rondo, BOS	53	625	11.8
Nash, PHX	61	693	11.4
Williams, NJN	58	590	10.2
Paul, NOR	66	642	9.7
Calderon, TOR	59	540	9.2
Wall, WAS	52	458	8.8
Felton, DEN	62	537	8.7
Westbrook, OKC	65	549	8.4
Kidd, DAL	66	548	8.3
Rose, CHI	64	509	8.0

CADILLAC CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

DORAL, Florida (AP) – Scores Sunday from the Cadillac Championship, a World Golf Championships event on the 7,334-yard, par-72 TPC Blue Monster:

FINAL ROUND

Nick Watney (550), $1,400,000	67-70-68-67–272
Dustin Johnson (315), $850,000	69-69-65-71–274
Anders Hansen (0), $465,000	71-69-68-67–275
Francesco Molinari (0), $465,000	68-68-70-69–275
Matt Kuchar (115), $350,000	68-69-68-71–276
Adam Scott (100), $271,000	68-70-68-71–277
Luke Donald (100), $271,000	67-72-66-72–277
Rickie Fowler (89), $200,000	71-73-68-66–278
Hunter Mahan (83), $175,000	64-71-71-73–279
Tiger Woods (69), $129,000	70-74-70-66–280
Jonathan Byrd (69), $129,000	70-74-68-68–280
Padraig Harrington (69), $129,000	68-71-68-73–280
Martin Laird (69), $129,000	67-70-70-73–280
Rory McIlroy (0), $129,000	68-69-69-74–280
Robert Allenby (57), $100,000	72-72-69-68–281
Ernie Els (57), $100,000	69-70-73-69–281
Kevin Streelman (57), $100,000	68-72-72-69–281
Lee Westwood (0), $89,000	70-74-70-68–282
Louis Oosthuizen (52), $89,000	71-73-67-71–282
Steve Stricker (52), $89,000	68-71-69-74–282
Paul Casey (52), $89,000	70-71-69-72–282
Ryan Moore (49), $83,000	70-74-70-69–283
Vijay Singh (49), $83,000	68-72-68-75–283
Charl Schwartzel (46), $77,250	71-71-75-67–284
Charley Hoffman (46), $77,250	67-75-73-69–284
Zach Johnson (46), $77,250	72-75-68-69–284
Martin Kaymer (0), $77,250	66-70-74-74–284
Rory Sabbatini (42), $73,000	74-74-67-70–285
Thomas Bjorn (0), $73,000	71-73-70-71–285
Aaron Baddeley (42), $73,000	72-66-73-74–285
Bill Haas (39), $69,500	74-68-71-73–286
Robert Karlsson (39), $69,500	69-73-71-73–286
Retief Goosen (39), $69,500	69-76-68-73–286
Jhonattan Vegas (39), $69,500	69-74-69-74–286
Kevin Na (35), $65,500	74-75-69-69–287
Thomas Aiken (0), $65,500	68-75-74-70–287
Camilo Villegas (35), $65,500	71-71-73-72–287
Bo Van Pelt (35), $65,500	71-74-66-76–287
Y.E. Yang (31), $62,000	73-72-72-71–288
K.J. Choi (31), $62,000	73-69-72-74–288
Edoardo Molinari (0), $62,000	71-73-70-74–288
Justin Rose (28), $59,000	77-71-70-71–289
Graeme McDowell (28), $59,000	70-73-71-75–289
Ryo Ishikawa (0), $59,000	65-76-70-78–289
Marcus Fraser (0), $55,500	69-78-71-72–290
Jason Day (25), $55,500	71-76-71-72–290
Ian Poulter (25), $55,500	73-70-74-73–290
D.A. Points (25), $55,500	68-72-71-79–290
Geoff Ogilvy (20), $50,500	76-73-72-70–291
S.S.P. Chowrasia (0), $50,500	74-72-72-73–291
Mark Wilson (20), $50,500	72-75-71-73–291
Kyung-tae Kim (0), $50,500	73-70-73-75–291
Jim Furyk (20), $50,500	74-71-71-75–291
Ryan Palmer (20), $50,500	73-73-68-77–291
Yuta Ikeda (0), $45,500	74-73-74-71–292
Peter Hanson (0), $45,500	73-73-73-73–292
Miguel A. Jimenez (0), $45,500	71-72-73-76–292
Phil Mickelson (15), $45,500	73-71-72-76–292
Seung-yul Noh (0), $43,000	72-70-79-72–293
Anthony Kim (11), $42,500	80-74-68-72–294
Ross Fisher (0), $41,500	69-76-76-74–295
Rhys Davies (0), $41,500	73-76-72-74–295
Hiroyuki Fujita (0), $41,500	71-73-74-77–295
Alvaro Quiros (0), $40,250	70-77-74-75–296
Peter Senior (0), $40,250	75-73-73-75–296
Jeff Overton (5), $39,750	75-77-73-73–298

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MATAGOLAI

From Page 28

three times, drilling 40 against NMC and 41 versus inaugural UBA champion Prospects. His lowest production was 19 points during their debut game this season against the Ol'Aces.

Matagolai was also a threat from three-point area, hitting 17 treys in the regular season to join Satbahi's Wowie Abuel (19 treys) and IP&E Konflikt's Elmer Esdrelon (18) in the Top 3. He also grabbed 21 rebounds, dished out 11 assists, and logged 15 steals while never missing a game with the Rollers.

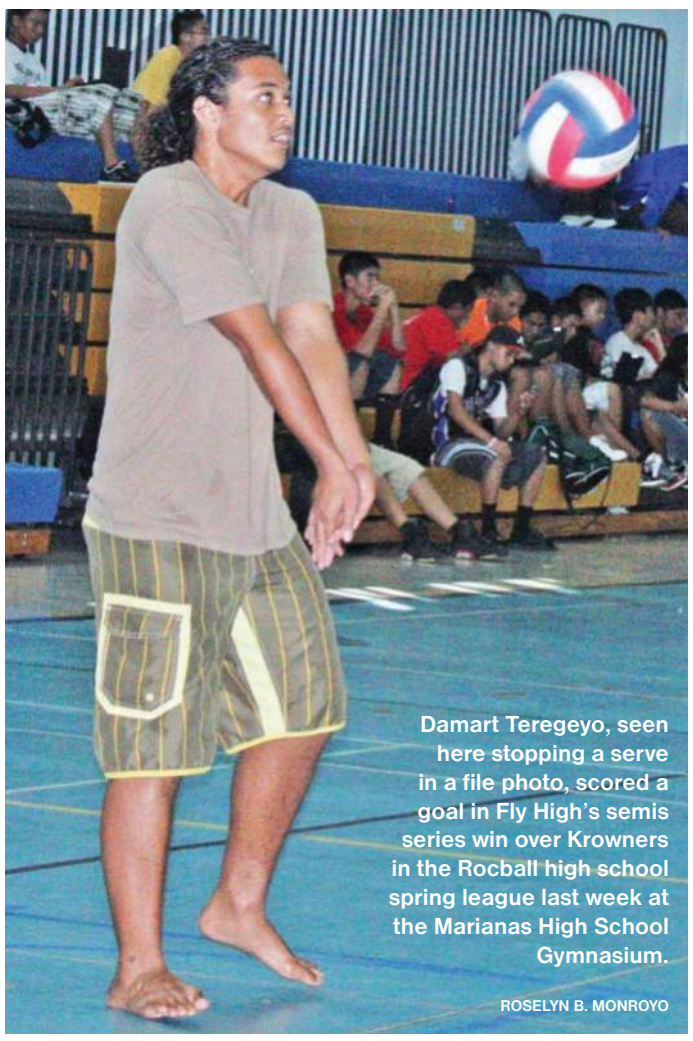
The Rollers gunner was the youngest player to vie for the coveted MVP plum, beating veteran guards Esdrelon, Abuel, Jun Estolas of Mobil, and shot-blocker Jawn Joyner of the Hoopaholics.

Matagolai was awarded the MVP trophy last night during the halftime break of Game 2 of the finals series between Mobil and IP&E Konflikt.

The Rollers hotshot now joins Noni Saipan's Kae Bernardo in the elite players list in the UBA caging. Bernardo took the MVP plum during the inaugural season of the UBA league, while Prospects' Bonbon Tamayo was named Finals MVP.

Selection of the regular season MVP was based on coaches and various league committees' votes. Coaches chose two players from the five nominees and they were not allowed to pick their own player. Nominees were selected based on their statistics in the regular season. From the list, players who got the Top 3 most votes advanced to the next round where the UBA committees selected the winner of the top individual award in the league.

Fly High soars to Game 1 win in Rocball finals



Damart Teregeyo, seen here stopping a serve in a file photo, scored a goal in Fly High's semis series win over Krowners in the Rocball high school spring league last week at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Fly High took Game 1 of the championship series in the 2011 Rocball High School Spring League, beating Kingz, 48-35, last Friday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Fly High drew first blood in the best-of-five finals series after juicing out Kingz in three sets. The Wilton Laniyo-led Fly High started its title bid with a 16-9 triumph in the opening set and then eked out a four-point win in the second set, 16-12. In the third set, Kingz was pressed to prevail to send the game in o-kon (overtime) and seemed to succeed after leading in the first part of the set. However, Fly High regained its form and pulled off a come-from-behind 16-14 victory to top the series opener.

Game 2 of the title series was played yesterday, but results were unavailable at press time. Game 3 will be played today at 12:50pm.

Laniyo scored two kees and two aces in Fly High's Game 1 win, while the Kingz's Jason Limes tallied three kees and Melvin Yamit made his first jam. A jam is scored if a defending player goes to the net and slams down a served ball.

The Kingz and Fly High arranged their finals duel after sweeping separates foes in the semifinals last week.

Fly High was pitted against Krowners in the semifinals and cruised to a 49-30 juiced-out win in Game 1 of their best-of-three semis affair. Fly High ruled the opening set, 16-12, won by three in the second, 17-14, and dominated Krowners in the third, 16-4, for a Game 1 sweep.

In Game 2, Fly High had another sweep, 17-9, 16-14, 15-4, to nail a 48-27 victory and wrap up the series early.

Ryan Ichihara led Fly High in Game 2 with four kees and one xunk. In Game 1, he connected on two kees and two xunks. Damart Teregeyo and Wilton Laniyo one goal each in the semis series with the former doing it in Game 1 and the latter in Game 2.

In the other semis pairing, the Kingz had a rough ride against the Chiefs in Game 1, pulling off a come-from-behind 44-40 victory. The Kingz lost the opening set of Game 1, 11-18. A 16-14 win in the second set gave the Chiefs a nine-point lead, 34-25, but still they lost the series opener when Kingz bounced back in the third set with a big 17-6 lead. In Rocball, a team can only win if it prevails in the third set and has the lead after the regulation.

In Game 2, the Kingz needed overtime to escape with a 51-41 victory and clinch the second finals berth.

The Kingz won the first and second sets, 17-11, 16-11, but dropped the third set, 11-16. After three sets, the Kingz still lead, 44-38. However, since the Chiefs topped the third set, they denied the Kingz an outright win and sent the game in o-kon. In overtime, the Kingz notched a 7-3 win to finally end the Chiefs' hopes of extending the semis series and set up its title match against Fly High.

Mahi Fishing Derby this Saturday

By WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

Saipan Fishermen's Association's 7th Annual Mahi Fishing Derby takes place this Saturday starting at the Smiling Cove Marina in Garapan.

All boats must check in between 6am and 8am before heading out to sea. All competitors must enter their catches to derby officials by the 5pm deadline at the Smiling Cove weigh-in station in order to qualify.

It costs $100 per boat to enter, for one captain and three anglers, and $25 for each additional crewmember.

All anglers must sign the release waiver form to participate, no exceptions.

Pre-registration for the event takes place on Friday, March 18, at Smiling Cove Marina from 4:30pm to 6:30pm. Registration on the day of the derby starts at 5:30am at Smiling Cove Marina.

Only Mahi fish will be counted toward the competition, regardless of the weight qualification. A boat can only win one prize per category.

The awards banquet is set to follow immediately after the event, where the Top 5 place finishers will receive prizes.

The *St. Andrew* topped last year's derby and a cash prize of $1,500. A total of 38 boats from Saipan and Tinian made up last year's field.

The *St. Andrew* was skippered by Juan Roberto and came into Smiling Cove Marina with a monster mahi-mahi that tipped the scales at 25.40 lbs. Roberto's crew included Steve Reyes and Phil Roberto.

Pre-boat safety inspections are encouraged; contact the DPS Boat Safety Unit at 664-9180 for inspections.

For more information about the derby contact Frank Tudela at 664-3200 or visit the SFA website at www.sfacnmi.com.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Fishermen Association president Gene Weaver and 6th Annual Mahi Fishing Derby organizing committee chair John Guerrero congratulate St. Andrew captain John Roberto and anglers, Steve Reyes and Phil Roberto, after topping last year's competition.

Snipers overtake Black Stallions in Masters division

Three teams also at helm of divisions

By WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Buddies Bar & Grill's Chagi Fan players, seen here in a file photo, downed Team Sang, 9-6, in a road game last Wednesday at D'Pirates Bar & Grill. The win gave Chagi Fan first place in the C-Chickirika standings over rival Team Sang by just a game.

Oleai Beach Bar & Grill's Sniper Destroyers, Buddies Bar & Grill's Chagi Fan, D'Pirates Bar & Grill's Mixed Blood Shooters, D'Pirates' Aschooschoo, and Ali'I Kamotes of Jonny's Bar & Grill lead their respective Saipan Electronic Dart Association's divisions after last week.

Last Wednesday, Master Division's Sniper Destroyers downed PIC Shooters, 12-4, at Round Two Bar & Grill to improve to 38-13. The victory allowed the team to surpass defending champion Buddies Bar & Grill's Black Stallions (37-14) in the standings.

D'Pirates sister teams D'Companeros (33-35) and M-Destroyers (32-36), meanwhile, are locked in battle for third place in the seven-team division.

Also on Wednesday, Chagi Fan showed up erstwhile top-ranked Team Sang, 9-6, on the road at D'Pirates to pull ahead of their C-Chickirika rivals in the standings.

Chagi Fan's 42-18 record is slightly ahead of Team Sang (41-19), while the other four teams in the division are at least 10 games behind.

Back on Monday, A Division's Mixed Blood Shooters defeated Cool Its, 12-5, on the road at Buddies and now lead the nine-team field with a 35-16 card.

D'Pirates' Kanto Boys and Oleai's Celebrity are currently tied for second place with identical 41-27 records. Notably, Mixed Blood's Jeff Barit scored a 121 High Out last week.

Also on Monday, Ladies League's Aschooschoo (45-15) defeated Buddies' Man Amigas (23-37), 12-3, at home to remain a game ahead of defending champions Yakau (44-16) of Jonny's Bar & Grill. Aschooschoo's Matrina Lisua scored a 145 High Out last week.

For its part, Yakau gained some ground on its rival by dusting caboose-team Spicy Girls (7-53) of Charlie's Cabaret, 14-1, at home last week.

Other division notables include Gaia Bar's Nasty Girls (31-29) and Buddies' Sistah! (30-30) who are in a tight race for third place; the Ladies league consists of six teams.

Current Tuesday B League frontrunner Ali'i Kamotes bested Oleai's Matua's (34-26), 9-6, at home last week to remain ahead of the pack.

Ali'i Kamotes Peejay Naval scored a 160 High In last Tuesday and teammate Eric Pascual is currently ranked first place in the individual statistics with a weighted average of 57.95.

At 51-9, Ali'i Kamotes has a nice 10-game cushion in the standings ahead of Buddies' Salbahe Brothers (41-19), with Matua's and D'Pirates' Mixed Blood Shooters II (32-28) in a fight for third. A total of eight teams make up the Tuesday League.

NMA starts All Schools qualifiers

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The race is on for qualifying slots to the 2011 PSS/McDonald's All Schools Athletics Championships, as Northern Marianas Athletics started its series of trials yesterday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

This week's trials will run for four days or until March 17 with students in various age groups competing in running, throwing, and jumping events. The first day of the trials yesterday drew more than 20 student-athletes, mostly from San Antonio Elementary School.

The qualifiers will then continue next week from March 21 to 24. The last trials for this month will be held from March 28 to 31. Next month, the qualifiers are schedule from April 4 to 7, April 11 to 14, and April 18 to 21. The CNMI National Championships on April 29 and 30 will also serve as the last two days of the trials.

Monday to Wednesday qualifiers are for elementary division, while Thursday trials are for junior high and high school categories.

NMA will then compile all the results of the participants and only the Top 8 student-athletes in each event are eligible to compete in the All Schools. The two remaining slots are reserved for Rota and Tinian students. In case Tinian and Rota do not have participants in an event, the next two Saipan finishers will take the slots. Also, student-athletes are allowed to join in only four events.

In the 2011 PSS/McDonald's All Schools Athletics Championships set for May 6 and 7, only the Top 3 placers in each event will be given medals, while the Top 3 schools in the various age group competitions will receive trophies.

Track facility closed

With the qualifiers ongoing, NMA would like to remind the public that the track and field facility will be closed from 3pm to 7pm from Monday to Saturday, starting yesterday until the first week of May.

NMA added only student-athletes trying out for the All Schools meet and the CNMI football players training and playing regular games will be allowed to use the facility on the designated times.

"The public's consideration and support is greatly appreciated," NMA developmental coach Elias Rangamar said.

For more information about the qualifiers, contact Rangamar at eli_rang@yahoo.com.

Fly High soars to Game 1 win in Rocball finals

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Sports

Big East gives new-look tournament a familiar feel

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Akimaru-led team tops XTERRA relay

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Saipan Swim Club's Kento Akimaru had a winning debut in the 2011 XTERRA Saipan Championship, as he and teammates Kevin Carey and Mamiko Oshima-Berger topped the relay event of Saturday's race.

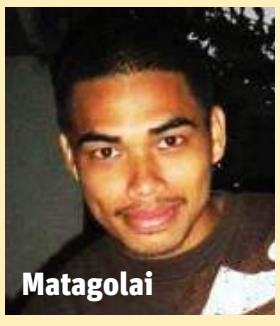
The trio completed the race in three hours, 41 minutes, and 55 seconds to finish first overall among eight teams and rule the mixed relay.

Akimaru, the youngest participant in the weekend's race at 10 years old, gave his team a good lead when he timed in at 21:32 in the 1.5-kilometer swim race. The SSC bet was fourth overall among 60 swimmers and was only two seconds behind eventual XTERRA Saipan men's champion Sam Gardner.

See AKIMARU-LED on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

From left, Kento Akimaru, Kevin Carey, and Mamiko Oshima-Berger in action during the mixed relay race in Saturday's 2011 XTERRA Saipan Championship.



Matagolai

Matagolai named UBA regular season MVP

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Rollers Basketball Club scoring machine Manny Matagolai claimed the regular season Most Valuable Player award in the 2nd Docomo Pacific/UBA Men's League.

Matagolai got the nod of majority of the coaches of the nine teams and members of the league committees after his consistent scoring in the eight games in the round-robin elimination.

The Rollers shooting guard averaged 26.25 points in eight games—the best this season—and collected 210 points. He made 75 two-point field goals, which was also the most this season, three more than Pete Iguel's 72.

The former Kagman High School stalwart owned the highest point scored in a game at 44 points, which he posted during their heart-breaking 95-96 loss to Mobil. Matagolai scored 40-plus points

See MATAGOLAI on Page 26

Fly High, Unknown win 2011 Marianas Kids Cup

By WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

Fly High and Unknown won their respective U14 and U17 divisions of the 2011 Marianas Kids Cup last Sunday on the sand courts of Fiesta Resort & Spa.

Over 120 participants turned out to compete in what traditionally serves as the final event of the yearly Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival.

The John Nekaifes-coached Fly High is made up of A.J. Castro, Lily Williams, Ryan Ichihara, Wilton Lani-

See FLY HIGH on Page 26

WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND

From left, Fly High's Ryan Ichihara, Damart Teregeyo, A.J. Castro, Wilton Laniyo, Lily Williams, and coach John Nekaifes are all smiles after topping a 16-team field to win the U17 division of the 2011 Marianas Kids Cup last Sunday on Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan's sand courts.

Alvarez

Litulumar

Youth boxing ends in draw

By WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

Last of a two-part series

The much-anticipated, first-ever youth boxing match between Trench Tech sparring mates P.J. "Lightning" Litulumar and Josenio "Little Bear" Alvarez ended in a draw Friday in Rites of Passage 10: Bad Intentions at the Royal Taga Hall of Saipan World Resort.

With mixed martial art fans braving last weekend's tsunami warning,

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